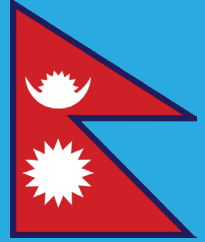


सुरक्षा

(A Journal of Security Affairs)



वर्ष ६

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२०८३ वैशाख



जननी जन्मभूमिश्च
स्वर्गादपि गरीयसी



नेपाल सरकार
रक्षा मन्त्रालय
सिंहदरबार, काठमाडौं

सुरक्षा

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सुरक्षा

(A Journal of Security Affairs)

संरक्षक

श्री केदारनाथ शर्मा, सचिव

विशेष सम्पादन

श्री मनोजकुमार आचार्य, सहसचिव, रक्षा मन्त्रालय

सम्पादक मण्डल

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(यस जर्नलमा सङ्गृहीत लेख रचनाहरू सम्बन्धित लेखकका निजी विचारहरू हुन् र तिनले नेपाल सरकार, रक्षा मन्त्रालयको आधिकारिक धारणाको प्रतिनिधित्व गर्दैनन् ।)

(Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in the articles compiled in this journal are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views/opinions of the Ministry of Defence, Government of Nepal.)



प्रधानमन्त्री

काठमाडौं, नेपाल

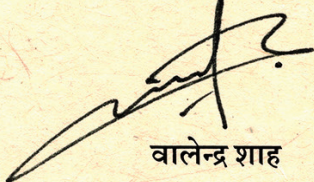
शुभकामना

रक्षा मन्त्रालयद्वारा मुलुकको सुरक्षा, प्रतिरक्षा तथा राष्ट्रिय हितसँग सम्बन्धित विषयहरूमा केन्द्रित भई विगत केही वर्षदेखि निरन्तर प्रकाशन हुँदै आएको “सुरक्षा” जर्नल को छैटौँ अङ्क प्रकाशन हुन लागेकोमा मलाई अत्यन्त गौरवको अनुभूति भएको छ।

नेपालको स्वतन्त्रता, सार्वभौमसत्ता, भौगोलिक अखण्डता, राष्ट्रियता, स्वाधीनता, स्वाभिमान, नेपाली नागरिकका हक-अधिकार तथा हितको संरक्षण, सिमानाको सुरक्षा, आर्थिक समुन्नति र समृद्धि लगायतका विषयहरू राष्ट्रिय हितका आधारभूत तथा संवेदनशील आयामहरू हुन्। समष्टिगत सुरक्षा व्यवस्थापनलाई प्रभावकारी, सुदृढ र परिणाममुखी बनाउन राज्यका सम्पूर्ण अङ्ग तथा निकायहरूबीच उच्चस्तरीय समन्वय, पारस्परिक विश्वास, सामञ्जस्य र सहकार्य अपरिहार्य रहन्छ। राष्ट्रिय हितका यस्ता आधारभूत पक्षहरूको संरक्षण, संवर्द्धन र प्रवर्द्धनमार्फत मुलुकमा दिगो शान्ति, राजनीतिक स्थिरता, सुशासन तथा समग्र राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा प्रणालीको सुदृढीकरण सुनिश्चित गर्नु राज्यका सबै निकायहरूको साझा दायित्व तथा उत्तरदायित्व हो।

अन्त्यमा, यस जर्नलका लागि आफ्नो अमूल्य लेख-रचना तथा बौद्धिक योगदान उपलब्ध गराउनुहुने सम्पूर्ण विषयविज्ञहरू, सम्पादन कार्यमा संलग्न सम्पादक मण्डलका सदस्यहरू, सम्बद्ध कर्मचारीहरू तथा प्रकाशन कार्यलाई सफल बनाउन प्रत्यक्ष वा परोक्ष रूपमा सहयोग पुऱ्याउनुहुने सम्पूर्ण महानुभावहरूप्रति हार्दिक आभार तथा धन्यवाद व्यक्त गर्दछु। राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाका विविध आयामहरूबारे गहन जानकारी प्राप्त गर्न इच्छुक पाठकवर्गका लागि यो जर्नल उपयोगी, ज्ञानवर्द्धक तथा मार्गदर्शक सिद्ध हुने विश्वास व्यक्त गर्दै हार्दिक शुभकामना व्यक्त गर्दछु।

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वालेन्द्र शाह



नेपाल सरकार
रक्षा मन्त्रालय
सिंहदरबार, काठमाडौं

शुभकामना

मुलुकको स्वतन्त्रता, सार्वभौमसत्ता, भौगोलिक अखण्डता, स्वाधीनता र नेपालीको हकहितको सुरक्षा लगायतका विषयमा रक्षा मन्त्रालयले महत्त्वपूर्ण भूमिका निर्वाह गर्दै आइरहेको छ। कुनै पनि मुलुकका लागि सुरक्षा सर्वोपरि महत्त्वको विषय हो। अतः मुलुकलाई आन्तरिक तथा बाह्य रूपमा सुरक्षित राख्दै विकास र समुन्नतिको यात्रामा अघि बढाउन राज्यका सबै अङ्गहरूले एक आपसमा उचित समन्वय र सामञ्जस्य कायम गर्दै सहकार्य गर्न आवश्यक छ।

सुरक्षा मुलुकको राष्ट्रिय हितको संरक्षण र संवर्द्धनसँग प्रत्यक्ष रूपमा गाँसिएको विषय हो। यसलाई राज्यले उच्च प्राथमिकतामा राखेको छ। मुलुकमा चुस्त र भरपर्दो सुरक्षा व्यवस्थापन सुशासन र विकासको लागि आधारशिला हो। रक्षा मन्त्रालयले विगत केही वर्षयता राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाका विभिन्न पक्षहरूमा सुरक्षा विज्ञ, कूटनीतिविद्, इतिहासकार, अनुसन्धानकर्मीहरूद्वारा लिखित लेखरचनाहरूको सँगालोको रूपमा “सुरक्षा जर्नल” प्रकाशन गर्दै आएको छ। यस जर्नलमा समावेश भएका लेखरचनाहरूले नेपालको समष्टिगत सुरक्षा र प्रतिरक्षाका क्षेत्रमा सर्वसाधारणलाई सत्यतथ्य सूचना र जानकारी सम्प्रेषण गर्दै सुरक्षाका आयामहरू सम्बन्धमा बुझ्न, बुझाउन र विश्लेषण गर्न समेत सहयोग पुऱ्याउने अपेक्षा लिइएको छ। बदलिँदो सुरक्षा चुनौतीहरूलाई समय अनुकूल सम्बोधन गर्दै मुलुकको सुरक्षा प्रणालीलाई थप सुदृढ तुल्याउँदै लैजानको लागि आवश्यक नीति निर्माणमा समेत जर्नलमा समाविष्ट विषयहरू उपयोगी हुनेछन् भन्ने मलाई लागेको छ।

अन्त्यमा, सुरक्षा जर्नलको यस अङ्कका लागि लेखरचना उपलब्ध गराउनुहुने सम्पूर्ण विषय विज्ञहरू, पत्रिका सम्पादनमा संलग्न सम्पादक मण्डलका सबै सदस्यहरूका साथै सम्बद्ध कर्मचारीहरू तथा प्रकाशन कार्यमा सहयोग पुऱ्याउनुहुने सबैलाई हार्दिक धन्यवाद व्यक्त गर्दछु। राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा र प्रतिरक्षाजस्तो महत्त्वपूर्ण विषयमा अनुसन्धानमूलक लेखरचनाहरू समेटी वार्षिक रूपमा प्रकाशन हुने यो जर्नल एक पठनीय र संग्रहणीय अध्ययन सामग्रीका रूपमा निरन्तर प्रकाशन हुँदै जाओस् भन्ने शुभकामना व्यक्त गर्दछु।

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केदारनाथ शर्मा
सचिव

सम्पादकीय

रक्षा मन्त्रालयले राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा तथा प्रतिरक्षासम्बन्धी नीति तर्जुमा र कार्यान्वयन तथा नेपाली सेनाको समग्र व्यवस्थापन लगायतको जिम्मेवारी सम्हाल्दै आएको छ। मुलुकको सार्वभौमसत्ता, भौगोलिक अखण्डता, राष्ट्रिय एकता र स्वाधीनता लगायतका राष्ट्रिय हितहरूको संरक्षण र संवर्द्धन गर्न मन्त्रालय सदा प्रतिबद्ध र क्रियाशील रहँदै आएको छ। समयको क्रमसँगै देखा परेका आन्तरिक तथा बाह्य सुरक्षा चुनौतीलाई विश्लेषण गर्दै मुलुकको समग्र सुरक्षा प्रबन्धलाई सुदृढ तुल्याउन मन्त्रालय प्रयत्नशील छ।

राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा एक संवेदनशील र अन्तरसम्बन्धित विषय हो। राज्यका सबै अङ्ग तथा नागरिकहरू समेतको सक्रियता, तत्परता र सचेतता तथा सबै पक्षबीच उचित समन्वय तथा सहकार्यमा मात्र राष्ट्रको समग्र सुरक्षा प्रणालीलाई सुदृढ र प्रभावकारी बनाउन सकिन्छ। राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षालाई सुदृढ बनाउन यस विषयमा निरन्तर अध्ययन, अनुसन्धान र विश्लेषण भइरहनु पर्दछ। रक्षा मन्त्रालयको यस आर्थिक वर्षको स्वीकृत वार्षिक कार्यक्रमअन्तर्गत सुरक्षा जर्नल प्रकाशन गर्ने लक्ष्यअनुसार छैटौँ अङ्क प्रकाशन गर्न लागिएको छ। यस अङ्कमा साइबर सुरक्षा, सीमा सुरक्षा, सुरक्षासँग सम्बन्धित स्वचालित प्रविधि, विपद् व्यवस्थापन, नागरिक सैनिक सम्बन्ध, विश्व शान्ति मिसन लगायतका विषयमा विज्ञहरूबाट प्राप्त लेखरचनाहरू समेटिएको छ। यो जर्नलमा सुरक्षा क्षेत्रका नवीन, ऐतिहासिक तथा अनुसन्धानमूलक सामग्रीहरूलाई समेटिएको हुँदा राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षासम्बन्धी विषयमा अध्ययन, अनुसन्धान र विश्लेषण गर्न चाहने सबैका लागि उपयोगी हुनेछ।

अन्त्यमा, सुरक्षा जर्नलको यस अङ्कका लागि आफ्ना अमूल्य लेखरचनाहरू उपलब्ध गराई हामीलाई सहयोग गर्नुहुने सम्पूर्ण लेखक महानुभावहरूका साथै प्रत्यक्ष अप्रत्यक्ष रूपमा जर्नल प्रकाशनमा सहयोग पुऱ्याउनुहुने सबै महानुभावहरूप्रति हार्दिक कृतज्ञता व्यक्त गर्दछौँ। साथै, यस जर्नलका आगामी अङ्कहरूलाई अभि स्तरीय र पठनीय बनाउन प्रबुद्ध पाठकवर्गबाट रचनात्मक सुझाव र सल्लाहको समेत अपेक्षा गरेका छौँ। अन्त्यमा, आगामी दिनमा पनि यस जर्नलको प्रकाशनमा सबैको रचनात्मक साथ, सहयोग र सद्भाव निरन्तर प्राप्त भइरहने अपेक्षा लिएका छौँ।

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राष्ट्रिय सार्वभौमिकताको रक्षाको लागि सबल राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको आवश्यकता



डा. गोविन्दप्रसाद कुसुम

सारसंक्षेप

सार्वभौमिकता राज्यको मूल आधार हो । यसको संरक्षण र संवर्द्धनबाट मुलुकको अस्तित्व जीवित रहन्छ । सार्वभौमिकता र सुरक्षाको बिचमा गहिरो सम्बन्ध रहेको छ । सुरक्षा कमजोर भयो भने राष्ट्रिय सार्वभौमिकता खतरामा पर्छ । सुशासनको कमी, सरकार र नागरिकका बिचमा अविश्वास, गरिबी, बेरोजगारी, सामाजिक, सांस्कृतिक मूल्य मान्यतामा ह्रास, राजनीतिक अस्थिरता, आन्तरिक द्वन्द्व आदिले राज्यको एकतामा विग्रह ल्याउँछ । यो विग्रहले देशभित्र असुरक्षा बढाउँछ । जब देशभित्र असुरक्षाका संकेतहरू सतहमा देखिन थाल्दछन् त्यही कमजोरीको बिन्दुबाट अप्रत्यक्ष वा प्रत्यक्ष रूपमा विदेशी हस्तक्षेप सुरु हुन्छ । अन्ततः राष्ट्रिय स्वतन्त्रता र अखण्डता खल्बलिन्छ । त्यसैले राज्यको समग्र सुरक्षा व्यवस्था सार्वभौमिकताको कवचको रूपमा रहेको हुन्छ । सरकारी सुरक्षा निकायहरूले मात्र सुरक्षा प्रदान गर्नुपर्छ भन्ने होइन, सम्पूर्ण नागरिकहरूको ऊर्जाशील चेतना र देशभक्तिको भावनाको माध्यमबाट देशको स्वतन्त्रता र सुरक्षा अविच्छिन्न कायम रहन्छ । त्यसैले आन्तरिक वा बाह्य सङ्कटको समयमा होस् अथवा राज्यको राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा नीतिलाई कार्यान्वयन गर्ने सबालमा होस्, बलियो राष्ट्रिय एकता देखाएर मात्र सार्वभौमिकताको रक्षा गर्न सकिन्छ ।

शब्दकुञ्जी:

सार्वभौमिकता, सुरक्षा, स्वतन्त्रता, जनता, राष्ट्रिय हित, स्वधीनता, एकता, सहभागिता, जनआकाङ्क्षा

अवधारणा

कुनै पनि राष्ट्रको लागि उसको सार्वभौमिकता सबैभन्दा प्रिय हुन्छ र राष्ट्रको अस्तित्व र पहिचान त्यहाँको सार्वभौमिकताको सुदृढताले स्थापित गर्दछ । सार्वभौमसत्ता राष्ट्रको स्वतन्त्रता, निर्णय गर्ने अधिकार र स्वशासनको प्रतीक हो । सार्वभौम राष्ट्रले बाह्य शक्तिको दबाब वा नियन्त्रणलाई स्वीकार गर्दैनन् र राज्यको नीति, कानून र शासन प्रणालीलाई जनताको इच्छा र आकाङ्क्षाबमोजिम आफैँ निर्माण गर्छन्, आफैँ कार्यान्वयन गर्छन् । त्यसैले त भनिन्छ- सार्वभौमिकता राष्ट्रको स्वतन्त्र जीवन र अस्तित्वको अभिन्न आधार हो ।

लेखक नेपाल सरकारका पूर्व सचिव तथा लोक सेवा आयोगका पूर्व सदस्य हुनुहुन्छ ।

राज्य-राष्ट्रको निर्माण भएसँगै यसको सार्वभौमिकताको विषय प्रमुख बन्दै आएको हो । राज्यको सरहद, स्वतन्त्रता, भौगोलिक अखण्डता, राष्ट्रिय हित, स्वाधीनता र समृद्धि जस्ता विषय जनताको आकाङ्क्षासँग आबद्ध रहने भएकोले राष्ट्रको सार्वभौमसत्ता ज्यादै संवेदनशील बनेको हुन्छ । राष्ट्र, चाहे सानो होस् वा ठूलो, विकसित होस् वा अल्पविकसित सबैको लागि उसको सार्वभौमिकता सर्वप्रिय र सम्मानित रहन्छ । संसारमा जतिपनि लडाइँहरू भएका छन्, ती सबै प्रयशः सम्बन्धित देशको स्वतन्त्रताको रक्षाको लागि गरिएको पाइन्छ ।

त्यसैले त राष्ट्र-राज्य होस् वा राज्य-राष्ट्र होस्, सुरुवातदेखि नै राज्य-राज्यका बिचमा विगतमा भएका लडाइँ, आ-आफ्नो देशको रक्षा र स्वाधीनताकै लागि भएको थियो । देशको सर्वाङ्गीण विकास उसको सार्वभौमिकताको रक्षा र सम्बर्द्धनद्वारा मात्र हुन्छ भन्ने सैद्धान्तिक र व्यावहारिक मान्यता अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय कानूनको आधारमा सुरुवात भएको हो जसको संरक्षण संयुक्त राष्ट्रसङ्घले गर्दै आएको छ ।

सोह्रौँ शताब्दीमा जब जीन वोडिन (१५७६) ले 'सार्वभौमिकता भनेको राज्यको स्थायी र सर्वोच्च शक्ति हो (Sovereignty is the absolute and perpetual power)' भन्ने देखि शासकीय मामिलाभिन्न यो विषयले प्रवेश पायो । त्यसपछि थमस होब्स (१६५१) ले सार्वभौमिकता त्यो सर्वोच्च अधिकार हो, जसले जनताको सहमतिको आधारमा शासन गर्छ भन्ने विषयउपर प्रकाश पारे । संयुक्त राष्ट्रसङ्घको चार्टरको धारा २(१), २(४) र २(७) ले सबै राष्ट्रहरू सार्वभौमिकताको सन्दर्भमा समान हुन्छन् र सबैको समान कानुनी सार्वभौमिकता हुन्छ भन्दै कुनै पनि बलियो वा कमजोर, जो जस्तो भए पनि अन्य राष्ट्रको आन्तरिक मामिलामा प्रत्यक्ष वा अप्रत्यक्ष हस्तक्षेप गर्न नपाइने विषयलाई सुनिश्चित गरेको छ । राष्ट्रसङ्घले यो पनि सुनिश्चित गरेको छ कि, कुनै पनि राष्ट्रले सार्वभौमिकता सम्पन्न राष्ट्रमाथि आक्रमण गर्न पाइँदैन । यद्यपि राष्ट्र सङ्घको चार्टरउपर सबै सदस्य राष्ट्रले प्रतिबद्धता व्यक्त गरे पनि 'आफ्नो देश र जनताको हित' भन्दै कमजोर देशउपर आक्रमण गर्ने, त्यहाँ बेथिति ल्याइदिने, भूभाग कब्जा गर्ने जस्ता 'जसको लाठी उसैको भैंसी' भन्ने उखान समय समयमा चरितार्थ हुने गरेको छ ।

सन् १९३३ को Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States को धारा १ ले एउटा राज्य हुन्का लागि स्थायी जनसङ्ख्या, परिभाषित सरहदसहितको भौगोलिक क्षेत्र, सरकार र अन्य राज्यहरूसँगको सम्बन्धजस्ता आधारभूत पक्ष आवश्यक पर्ने र यी विषयहरू पूरा गरेको छ भने मात्र उसले कानुनी राज्यको हैसियत, सार्वभौमिकता र स्वतन्त्रताको अधिकार उपभोग गर्नसक्ने विषयलाई स्थापित गरेको छ । यसैगरी Vienna Convention on Law of Treaties (१९६९) लगायतका अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय कानून र संहिताहरूले सार्वभौम सत्ताबारे स्पष्ट पारेका छन् ।

ल्याटिन भाषाको Superanus शब्दबाट आएको Sovereignty को शाब्दिक अर्थ हुन्छ, 'सर्वोच्च शक्ति । यो अविभाज्य, स्थायी र सर्वोच्च हुन्छ । राज्यको जीवनदायी आत्माको रूपमा रहेको सार्वभौम सत्ताले जनताको सुरक्षा र स्थायित्वलाई सुरक्षित राख्छ, सुदृढ बनाउँछ । तर यो सर्वोच्च शक्ति कुनै देखिने वा छोएर थाहा पाउने वस्तु भने होइन । यो त महसुस गर्ने वा अनुभूत गर्ने विषय हो । स्वतन्त्रताको उपभोग, शासकीय मामिलामा बाह्य दबाव वा प्रभावरहित भएर गरिएका जनआकाङ्क्षा अनुसारका निर्णय, बाह्य शक्तिको आक्रमण वा हस्तक्षेपका

विरुद्धमा उत्रेर सीमा भूभागको अतिक्रमण हुन् खोजेमा वा भएको खण्डमा त्यसको विरुद्धमा कानुनी, कूटनैतिक र अन्य उपायद्वारा समाधान गर्नेजस्ता कार्यबाट सार्वभौमिकतालाई बचाइन्छ र सार्वभौमिकताको अनुभव गरिन्छ ।

प्राचीन एसियामा कौटिल्य (ई.पू. चौथो शताब्दी), कन्फ्युसियस (५५१-४७९ ई.पू.) र हान फिजी (Han Feizie-ई.पू.तेस्रो शताब्दी) हरूले क्रमशः राज्य सार्वभौम हुने र स्वतन्त्र रहने, कानुनी नैतिकताको आधारमा शासकले राज्य गर्नुपर्ने र राज्यमा सार्वभौम कानून र जनइच्छा नै सर्वोच्च हुन्छन् भनेका थिए । यसबाट स्पष्ट हुन्छ, प्राचीन एसियाली दर्शन र राजनीतिभित्र राज्यको सार्वभौमिकता विषयले धेरै अगाडि नै प्रवेश पाइसकेको थियो । यी दार्शनिकहरूले जनताको इच्छा र आकाङ्क्षा तथा उनीहरूको निर्णयबाट मात्र राज्यको सार्वभौमसत्ताको संरक्षण हुन्छ र यो सुदृढ बन्छ भन्ने तथ्यलाई स्थापित गरेका थिए ।

प्रकृति

सार्वभौमिकताको प्रकृति बहुआयामिक हुन्छ । राज्यले लिने नीति र गर्ने प्रत्येक कार्यसँग यसको प्रत्यक्ष सरोकार रहन्छ । यस अर्थमा जनताले इच्छा गरेको र आकाङ्क्षा लिएको विषयलाई सकारात्मक रूपमा महसुस र अनुभव हुनेगरी राज्यका तीनवटै अङ्गद्वारा गरिने कार्यहरू सार्वभौमिकताको सरहदभित्र रहेका हुन्छन् । त्यसमा पनि लोकतन्त्रमा सार्वभौमसत्ता मूलतः जनतामा निहित हुने भएकोले जनचाहनालाई विशेष सम्बोधन गर्नुपर्ने दायित्व सरकारको रहन्छ । यस परिवेशमा रहेर यसको प्रकृतिलाई अध्ययन गर्नुपूर्व यसको महत्त्वउपर विशेष दृष्टि पुऱ्याउनु जरूरी हुन्छ ।

सार्वभौमिकताले राष्ट्रको स्वतन्त्र अस्तित्व र बेग्लै पहिचानलाई स्थापित मात्रै गर्दैन अपितु, एउटा राष्ट्रले निर्माण गर्ने आर्थिक, राजनीतिक, सामाजिक, सांस्कृतिकलगायत शासकीय सबालहरूमा आबद्ध प्रत्येक नीति निर्माणका लागि समेत यसले राष्ट्रको आन्तरिक सुरक्षा र शान्ति स्थापना, राष्ट्रिय एकता र अखण्डताको मूल स्रोतको रूपमा काम गरेको हुन्छ । साथै अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय जगतमा सम्बद्ध राष्ट्रले अन्य राष्ट्रसँग कूटनीतिक सम्बन्ध स्थापित गरी आफ्नो मुलुकको जनताको चाहनाअनुरूप राष्ट्रिय लक्ष्य, जुन संविधानद्वारा परिष्कृत गरिएको हुन्छ, तिनीहरूको सहज प्राप्तिका लागि कार्य गर्नका निम्ति बाटो निर्धारण गरेको हुन्छ । यी सबै कार्य गर्ने गराउने सबालमा राष्ट्रका सकल नागरिकहरूको संलग्नता तथा सहभागिता सुनिश्चित गर्नका लागि सार्वभौमसत्ता मूल आधार बन्ने गर्दछ । उपर्युक्त पक्षलाई ध्यान दिँदै, सार्वभौमिकताको प्रकृति कस्तो हुन्छ भन्ने विषयलाई बुझ्न सकिन्छ ।

पहिलो प्रकृतिको हो, यसको आन्तरिक पक्षको सार्वभौमिकता । आन्तरिक पक्ष भन्नाले मुलुकभित्र गरिने ती कार्यहरू हुन् जुन राज्यका तीनवटै अङ्ग-कार्यपालिका, न्यायपालिका र व्यवस्थापिकाले संविधानद्वारा निर्दिष्ट भएअनुसार गर्दछन् । जस्तो व्यवस्थापिकाले ऐन, कानून बनाउँछ, कार्यपालिकाले ऐन, कानूनको कार्यान्वयन गर्दछ र न्यायपालिकाले विद्यमान ऐन, कानूनको परिधिभित्र रहेर न्याय प्रदान गर्दछ । यी अङ्गहरू आ-आफूलाई तोकिएको काम गर्न वा निर्णय लिन स्वतन्त्र छन् । यो स्वतन्त्रता नै उनीहरूको सार्वभौम अधिकार हो । यहाँनिर बुझनुपर्ने हुन्छ लोकतान्त्रिक तरिकाले राज्य सञ्चालन गर्नका लागि जुन संविधान बनाइन्छ, त्यो पनि राष्ट्रको सार्वभौम

अधिकारभित्रकै एउटा भाग हो । नेपालको संविधानले नेपालको सार्वभौमसत्ता र राजकीय सत्ता नेपाली जनतामा निहित, राखेको छ र नेपाली जनताले यसको प्रयोग निर्वाचित प्रतिनिधिहरूको माध्यमबाट गर्दछन् ।

दोस्रो प्रकृति हो, बाह्य सार्वभौमिकता । कुनै पनि राष्ट्र विश्वबाट अलग रहेर बाँच्न सक्दैन । एकअर्काको सहयोगद्वारा मात्र राष्ट्रहरूले आफ्नो सामर्थ्यलाई बढाउन सक्छन्, क्षमता वृद्धि गर्न सक्छन् र विकासलाई उचाइमा पुऱ्याउन सक्छन् । होइन भने, उक्त राष्ट्र कमजोर हुँदै जान्छ र कुनै एउटा कालखण्डमा पुग्दा त्यो राष्ट्र एउटा इतिहास बन्नपुग्छ । त्यसैले त हरेक राष्ट्रले कानुनी वैधताका लागि समेत स्वतन्त्र रूपमा अन्य राष्ट्रसँग कूटनीतिक सम्बन्ध स्थापित गरेका हुन्छन् । नेपालले संयुक्त राष्ट्र सङ्घको सदस्य बन्नका लागि पाँच-पाँच वर्षसम्म (१९५०-१९५५) जुन कठिनाई भोग्नुपऱ्यो, त्यसले देखाउँछ, सम्बन्ध स्थापनाको पक्ष कुन हदसम्म महत्त्वपूर्ण हुँदोरहेछ । सन् १९५० मा राणाहरूको एकतन्त्रीय शासनबाट मुक्त भएपछि नेपाल एउटा सार्वभौमसत्ता सम्पन्न देश हो भन्ने स्थापित गर्नु जरुरी थियो, जसका लागि संयुक्त राष्ट्र सङ्घको सदस्य बन्न अनिवार्य र अपरिहार्य थियो । त्यो कार्यमा राष्ट्र सङ्घको बैठकमा कतिपय मुलुकहरूको कारण पटक पटक अस्वीकारको पेचिलो र दुःखपूर्ण अवस्थाबाट गुऱ्जिनुपर्ने नियति नेपालले भोग्नुपऱ्यो । यो वास्तवमै अप्ठेरो स्थिति थियो । यदि त्यो बेलाका नेपाली शासकहरूले यसलाई कूटनीतिक हिसाबबाट चनाखो भएर सम्बन्धलाई अगाडि नबढाएको भए नेपाल सार्वभौम राष्ट्रको रूपमा स्थापित हुनसक्थ्यो भन्न गाह्रो थियो ।

तेस्रो प्रकृति हो- स्थायित्व र अविभाज्यता । सार्वभौमिकता जहिले पनि स्थायी प्रकृतिको हुन्छ र यो अविभाज्य पनि हुन्छ । सार्वभौमिकताको अलिकता भाग चुँडाएर अर्कोतिर राखौं भन्ने हुँदैन । यो सिङ्गो र स्थायी हुन्छ । त्यही भएकोले हरेक सार्वभौम राष्ट्र एक अर्कामा समान हैसियत राख्ने गर्छन्, चाहे ती बलिया राष्ट्र होउन् वा निर्बलिया । सार्वभौमिकताको सबालमा सबै बराबर हुन्छन् । त्यसैले त राष्ट्र सङ्घमा रहेका सबै १९३ सदस्य राष्ट्रहरूको समान हैसियत र समान प्रतिनिधित्व हुन्छ । ठुलो राष्ट्रको ठुलो सङ्ख्या र सानो राष्ट्रको थोरै सङ्ख्या भन्ने रहँदैन ।

सार्वभौमिकता र राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा

सार्वभौमिकता एकाङ्गी होइन, बहुआयामिक विषय हो । अरूभन्दा पृथक् रहेर सार्वभौमिकतालाई हेर्न सकिँदैन । किनकि यो शासकीय मामिलाका प्रत्येक पाइलासँग जोडिएको हुन्छ, आम नागरिकको अस्तित्वसँग गाँसिएको हुन्छ । त्यसैले सार्वभौमिकतालाई राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको आवश्यकता पर्दछ । राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा दुईवटा आयमा छन्- आन्तरिक र बाह्य । दुवै पक्षबाट सुरक्षा प्रदान गरेमा मात्र सार्वभौमसत्ता जीवन्त रहिरहन सक्छ । होइन भने यो, एउटा कानुनी हक वा दाबीको विषयमा सीमित हुन्छ, सार्थक व्यवहारमा प्रयोग आउन सक्दैन ।

नेपालको राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा नीतिले राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको बारेमा स्पष्ट पारेको छ । यसअनुसार नेपालको स्वतन्त्रता, सार्वभौमिकता, भौगोलिक अखण्डता, राष्ट्रिय एकता, स्वाधीनता, स्वाभिमानको रक्षा र जनताको सुरक्षा, दिगो शान्ति सुरक्षा र राजनीतिक स्थायित्व, राष्ट्रिय पहिचान तथा अस्तित्वको रक्षा एवं जनताको स्वतन्त्रताको रक्षाजस्ता महत्त्वपूर्ण विषयहरू यस अन्तर्गत पर्दछन् । आधारभूतरूपमा सार्वभौमिकताको जीवन्तताको लागि बलियो सुसङ्गत

र संयोजित सुरक्षा तथा अनुकूलनशील र लचिलो सुरक्षा प्रणाली हुनुपर्दछ, जसले राज्यको आन्तरिक सुरक्षा र बाह्य रक्षालाई सुदृढ गर्न सकोस् । कारण, सार्वभौमिकताको पहिलो शर्त नै सुदृढ सुरक्षा हो Paul D. Williams (२०१३) ले सुरक्षाबारे प्रष्ट पाउँ भनेका छन् 'Security is most commonly associated with the alleviation of threats to cherished values' राज्यको मूल्य मान्यताउपर खतरा उत्पन्न हुन् नदिई त्यस्तो खतरा रोकिनु नै सुरक्षा हो । उनी राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाबारे भन्छन् "National security is defined by governments, influenced by political debates, and shaped by what leaders and societies perceive as threats. This means that national security policies often reflect ideology, interests, and power dynamics, not just objective dangers". 'राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको परिभाषा सरकारहरूले निर्धारण गर्छन्, राजनीतिक छलफल द्वारा यसलाई प्रभावित पार्छन् र नेता तथा समाजले राज्यको लागि खतरा के हो भन्ने सबालका आधारमा त्यसलाई आकार दिन्छन् । यसको मतलब राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षासँग सम्बन्धित नीतिहरू केवल वस्तुगत जोखिममात्र होइनन् बरु विचारधारा, स्वार्थ र शक्तिको गतिशीलतालाई पनि प्रतिबिम्बित गरेका विषयहरू हुन् ।'

अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय सम्बन्धका यथार्थवादी विद्वानहरू जस्तो थोमस हब्स (Thomas Hobbs), ह्यान्स मोर्गेन्थेउ (Hans Morgenthau) र केनेथ वाल्ट्ज (Kenneth Waltz) हरूले राज्यको अस्तित्व र जीवनका लागि प्रशस्त मात्रामा रक्षा र सुरक्षा नीतिहरूको सफल कार्यान्वयन गर्नुपर्नेमा जोड दिन्छन् । राज्यको सामाजिक सम्भौताको सिद्धान्तअनुसार राज्यका नागरिकहरूले आफ्नो स्वतन्त्रता र हकको एउटा निश्चित भाग आफ्नो सुरक्षाका लागि राज्यलाई दिएका हुन्छन् । यस अर्थमा सार्वभौमिकताको पहिलो कार्य सुरक्षासम्बन्धी नै हुन्छ । नागरिकहरूले आफ्नो सार्वभौम अधिकारको प्रयोग गर्नका लागि निर्वाचित सरकारलाई स्वीकृति प्रदान गर्नुको कारण नै सार्वभौमिकताको रक्षाका लागि सरकारलाई कानुनी र नैतिक रूपमा गतिशील बनाउनु हो । यसैभित्र समग्र हिसाबले राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको विषय प्रमुख मुद्दा बनेको हुन्छ । सारांशमा भन्नुपर्दा, राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा कुनै विकल्प होइन- यो राष्ट्रको अस्तित्वको अनिवार्य शर्त हो, अपरिहार्य आधार हो । सुरक्षा कमजोर भयो भने सार्वभौमिकता ढल्छ, सुरक्षा बलियो भयो भने स्वतन्त्रता स्थायी हुन्छ । यहाँनिर सुरक्षाको कुरा गर्दा मानव सुरक्षालाई पनि ध्यान दिनुपर्दछ ।

कवचको रूपमा सुरक्षा

सार्वभौमिकतालाई संरक्षण गर्ने हेतुले सुरक्षाले जहिले पनि कवचको काम गर्दछ । एक्काइसौं शताब्दीको यस युगमा सार्वभौमिकताको रक्षा बढी पेचिलो र संवेदनशील विषय बन्दैआएको छ । विशेषगरी साना र कमजोर मुलुकहरूको अगाडि आफ्नो मुलुकको सार्वभौमिकताउपर बलिया र शक्तिशाली राष्ट्रहरूबाट कुनै पनि समयमा प्रहार हुन सक्छ भन्ने सन्त्रास बढ्दै गएको छ । अफ्रिका, एसिया र ल्याटिन अमेरिकामा जसरी भित्री वा बाह्य हस्तक्षेप बढेको देखिन्छ, त्यसले आर्थिक र सामरिक क्षेत्रमा कमजोर देखिएका मुलुकहरू बढी सशङ्कित देखिनु अस्वाभाविक होइन ।

हिजोका दिनमा असंलग्न राष्ट्रहरूको सङ्गठन (NAM) सक्रिय थियो र यस प्रकारका मुद्दाउपर राष्ट्र सङ्घको साधारण सभामा समेत सामूहिक रूपमा बलियो आवाज उठ्थ्यो र यसरी उठाइएका मुद्दाहरूउपर यथोचित कारबाही

हुन्थ्यो पनि । आज त्यस प्रकारको स्थिति रहेको छैन । असंलग्न राष्ट्रहरूको संगठन सक्रिय छैन । अप्टेरो पर्दा आफ्नो लागि कसले बोलिदिने हो, त्यो प्लेटफर्म छैन, भए पनि कमजोर छ । हरेक बलिया देशहरूले भूमण्डलीकरणको परिवेशमा आ-आफ्नो देशको अर्थिक उन्नतिका लागि व्यापार व्यवसायको वृद्धि र उन्नत प्रविधिको विकासको लागि कसैलाई कसैको मूल्यमा चिढाउने वा बेखुसी पार्न चाहँदैनन् । यो आजको यथार्थता हो ।

त्यसो हो भने, नेपालजस्तो मध्यम क्षेत्रफल भएको तर आर्थिक र प्रविधिको हिसाबले सानो मुलुकका लागि आफ्नो सार्वभौमसत्तालाई आँच नआओस् भन्नका निमित्त के गर्ने ? यसका लागि उसले केही व्यावहारिक र क्षमताअनुसारको कार्य गर्नुपर्छ । जबसम्म अर्थतन्त्र सबल हुँदैन, प्रविधिको क्षेत्रमा उन्नत हुनु सकिँदैन, जबसम्म शासन सबल र लोकप्रिय हुँदैन, सार्वभौमसत्ता जहिले पनि खतराको दायराभित्र रहिरहन्छ । सार्वभौमिकताको रक्षा गर्नका लागि सुरक्षा बलहरूलाई विशेष जिम्मेवारी सुम्पिएको हुन्छ । नेपालको सन्दर्भमा नेपाली सेना, नेपाल प्रहरी, सशस्त्र प्रहरी बल र राष्ट्रिय अनुसन्धान विभागहरूले नेपालको संविधान र सम्बन्धित निकायसँग आबद्ध ऐन नियमले दिएको जिम्मेवारी पूरा गर्नुपर्ने हुन्छ ।

सुरक्षा बलले भौगोलिक सीमाको रक्षा गर्छन् । सीमाको सुरक्षा सार्वभौमिकताको सुरक्षा हो । यसका लागि सुरक्षा बललाई मानसिक रूपमा उच्च, सिप र क्षमतामा अब्बल, प्रविधि र अनुसन्धानमा उम्दा राख्नुपर्छ । जब सुरक्षा सङ्गठनहरूको मनोबल कमजोर हुन्छ, तब आन्तरिक सुरक्षा कमजोर बन्दछ । जब आन्तरिक सुरक्षा बलियो हुँदैन, स्वदेशी र विदेशी दुवै तत्त्वले धमिलो पानीमा माछा मार्न थाल्छन् । यसले मुलुकभित्र राजनीतिक अस्थिरता सिर्जना हुन्छ । राजनीतिक अस्थिरता हुनुको अर्थ हो- राजनीतिक स्वतन्त्रताको हनन हुनु । राजनीतिक स्वतन्त्रता हनन हुँदा सरकारी निर्णयमा बाह्य हस्तक्षेप बढ्छ । परिणामतः सार्वभौमसत्ता जोखिममा पर्दछ । त्यसो हो भने, राज्यको सार्वभौमिकताको संवर्द्धन गर्ने कसरी ? यो आजको अहम् र महत्त्वपूर्ण सबाल हो ।

विकसित राष्ट्रले मात्र अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय समुदायबाट सम्मान पाउँछन् । कमजोर राष्ट्र जहिले पनि सम्मान पाउने सबालमा अन्तिम लाइनमा उभिएका हुन्छन् । त्यसैले यो शताब्दीले नेपालजस्तो देशका लागि चुनौती थपेको छ । समग्र सुरक्षा, राजनीतिक स्थिरता, सबल अर्थतन्त्र र समृद्धिको क्षेत्रमा चुनौती थपिएको छ भन्दै हात बाँधेर बस्ने हो भने कहीं पनि पुग्न सकिँदैन । चुनौतीकै बिचबाट अवसर खोज्ने र त्यो अवसरको सदुपयोग गर्ने हो । सार्वभौमिकताको संवर्द्धनका लागि राष्ट्रिय विकास अनिवार्य शर्त हो, राष्ट्रिय पहिचानको संरक्षण आधारभूत जिम्मेवारी हो र राष्ट्रिय एकताको सुदृढीकरण अहम् कार्य हो । साथै, लोकतान्त्रिक मूल्य मान्यताअनुसार राजनीतिक, सामाजिक र आर्थिक संस्थाहरूको सबलीकरण, देश प्रेमको भावना, सुशासनको प्रत्याभूति, सुरक्षा सङ्गठन र जनताबिचको विश्वासिलो र सहयोगी अन्तःसम्बन्ध तथा कुशल विविधता व्यवस्थापन (Diversity Management) ले सुरक्षा चुनौतीलाई कम गर्दै सार्वभौमिकताको संवर्द्धनमा आडिलो योगदान पुऱ्याउँछ ।

भूमण्डलीकरणको प्रभाव

जसरी भूमण्डलीकरणले सबैजसो आर्थिक, राजनीतिक र सामाजिक सांस्कृतिक क्षेत्रमा प्रभाव पार्यो र पारिरहेको छ । त्यसबाट कमजोर क्षमता भएका देशहरूलाई आफ्नो प्रतिस्पर्धी क्षमतालाई उल्लेख्य रूपमा वृद्धि

गर्नेपने बाध्यता आएको छ । सम्बन्धित मुलुकले आफ्नो सामाजिक र आर्थिक क्षेत्रको अधिकतम विकासद्वारा भूमण्डलीकरणको बेगलाई राज्यको पूर्ण हितमा परिचालन गर्न सकेन भने त्यहाँको राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षामा खलल पर्ने सम्भावना ज्यादै धेरै हुन्छ । त्यसैले त भूमण्डलीकरणले नेपाल जस्तो कमजोर राष्ट्रलाई दिने चुनौतीहरू धेरै रहेका छन् । यही सन्दर्भमा नवउदारीकरणले गर्दा कमजोर राष्ट्रको हार्डवेयर र सफ्टवेयर उत्पादनको प्रतिस्पर्धी क्षमता न्यून हुन गई उक्त राष्ट्र बाह्य उत्पादनको बजारको रूपमा परिणत हुन्छ । यहाँनिर उदाहरणका लागि डिजिटल निर्भरतालाई लिन सकिन्छ । यसले कमजोर राष्ट्रको सुरक्षालाई खतरामा पार्ने सम्भावना धेरै रहन्छ । बाह्य प्रविधिमा निर्भरता बढ्दा बाह्य नियन्त्रण हावी हुन्छ । त्यसैले विदेशी सफ्टवेयर सामग्रीको प्रयोग देशभित्र गर्दा त्यसलाई राष्ट्रिय हित र स्वार्थ अनुकूल अवलम्बन गर्नका लागि देशभित्रैबाट परिचालन गर्नु आवश्यक हुन्छ । तर स्वदेशी क्षमता र प्रविधि सो अनुरूप हुन सकेन भने राष्ट्रको सुरक्षा प्रणाली भत्किन्छ, राष्ट्रिय महत्त्वका गोपनीयताहरू बाहिरिन्छन् र सामाजिक एकता खल्बलिन्छ । यसबाट समग्र मुलुक र जनताको हितउपर डरलाग्दो नकारात्मक असर पर्छ । यस परिप्रेक्ष्यमा समकालीन चुनौतीहरू थपिँदै गएका छन् ।

वर्तमान विश्व परिवेशले सिर्जना गरेको नयाँ राजनीतिक, आर्थिक र सामाजिक व्यवस्थाले दिएको चुनौती अन्तर्गत, उन्नत प्रविधिद्वारा गरिने अदृश्य आक्रमण र सफ्टपावरका माध्यमबाट दिइने दबाबले सार्वभौमिकताउपर नयाँ ढङ्गको चुनौती थपिएको छ । आजको युद्ध जमिन वा आकाशको सिमानामा मात्र सीमित रहने होइन, देशको अर्थतन्त्र, राजनीति र सांस्कृतिक क्षेत्रसम्म पुग्ने हुन्छ । बलिया देशले कमजोर देशका नागरिकहरूको दिमागलाई आफू अनुकूल परिवर्तन गर्ने दीर्घकालीन योजनाअनुरूप कार्य गरिरहेका हुन्छन् । उनीहरू त्यस्ता देशका राजनीतिक, सामाजिक र आर्थिक संस्थाभित्र प्रवेश गरेका हुन्छन् । त्यसैले आधुनिक सुरक्षा अवधारणा केवल आधुनिक हतियार र सुरक्षाका स्रोत साधनसम्म मात्र सीमित छैन, यसले मानव सुरक्षालगायत राज्यको बाह्य र आन्तरिक क्षेत्रका सम्पूर्ण क्रियाकलापलाई समेटेको छ ।

सार्वभौमिकताको रक्षा

देशको सार्वभौमिकताको रक्षा गर्नका लागि केही महत्त्वपूर्ण पक्षहरू हुन्छन् जसको सक्रियता र सबलता जरुरी हुन्छ ।

- देशको जनता नै त्यस्तो शक्ति हो, जसले सार्वभौमिकताको रक्षाको लागि आफ्नो ज्ञान, क्षमता, विवेकका साथै तन, मन र धनसमेत न्यौछावर गर्छन् । जबसम्म सम्पूर्ण जनता एकजुट रहिरहन्छन् र आपसी मतभेद हटाएर हातेमालो गरेर अगाडि बढिरहन्छन्, तबसम्म देशको स्वाभिमान, अखण्डता, स्वतन्त्रता र स्वाधीनताउपर आँच आउन सक्दैन । राष्ट्रको स्वाधीनता र भौगोलिक अखण्डता त्यो बेला टुक्रिन्छ वा कमजोर हुन्छ, जुनबेला देशका सकल नागरिकहरूका बिचमा बेमेल हुन्छ, आपसी कलह हुन्छ र राष्ट्रिय स्वार्थभन्दा व्यक्तिगत स्वार्थलाई प्रमुखता दिइन्छ । त्यसैले जीनज्याक्स रुसोले आफ्नो The Social Contract कृतिमा भनेका छन् 'When the people are divided, the state is already lost' (जब जनताहरू विभाजित हुन्छन्, राज्यको अस्तित्व नै सङ्कटमा परिसकेको हुन्छ) ।

- आन्तरिक सुशासनलाई बलियो र अभै बलियो बनाइराख्ने मात्र सार्वभौमिकताको रक्षा गर्न सहज वातावरण बन्छ र त्यसले आमनागरिकलाई सरकारप्रति विश्वस्त पार्छ । परिणामतः राष्ट्रप्रेम बढ्छ, देशभक्तिको भावना जागृत हुन्छ । देशको लागि मैले योगदान गर्नुपर्छ भन्ने भाव पैदा हुन गई राष्ट्रिय एकता समृद्ध हुन्छ । सुशासन कमजोर भयो भने जनअसन्तुष्टि बढ्न गई, राष्ट्रिय एकतामा खलल पुग्छ । त्यसैले राष्ट्रिय एकता र अखण्डता कायम गर्न कानुनी शासन, प्रभावकारी सार्वजनिक सेवा प्रवाह, भ्रष्टाचार नियन्त्रण र भ्रष्टाचार नियन्त्रण गर्ने संस्थाहरूको सबलीकरण गर्दै सरकार र जनताको बिचमा विश्वासिलो वातावरण बनाउनुपर्छ ।
- सबल अर्थतन्त्रद्वारा आत्मनिर्भर बन्ने कार्यले राष्ट्रको भूमण्डलीय छविलाई उच्च बनाउने हुँदा, राज्यले यो पक्षको कार्यान्वयनमा विशेष जोड दिनुपर्छ । आर्थिक रूपमा बलियो हुँदा, त्यसले सामरिक पक्षलाई पनि बलियो बनाउँछ । आमजनताको मनोबल उच्च हुन्छ । जसले गर्दा अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय मञ्चमा मुलुकको आवाजले विशेष स्थान पाउँछ ।
- शक्तिशाली सुरक्षा र भरपर्दो रक्षा प्रणालीको विकास गर्नु आवश्यक हुँदै गएको छ । आन्तरिक सुरक्षा व्यवस्थापनका लागि भरपर्दो र क्षमतावान् सुरक्षा सङ्गठन चाहिन्छ । नेपालको सन्दर्भमा आन्तरिक र बाह्य सुरक्षा तथा रक्षा प्रणालीसँग आबद्ध रहेका नेपाली सेना, नेपाल प्रहरी, सशस्त्र प्रहरी बल र राष्ट्रिय अनुसन्धान विभागहरूलाई साधनस्रोत सम्पन्न तुल्याउँदै बलियो बनाउने, सकल दर्जाका कर्मचारीहरूको मनोबल उच्च गराउने र यी सङ्गठनलाई राज्यको सुरक्षा प्रदान गर्ने सबालमा सुरक्षा निकाय र नागरिक सम्बन्धलाई सुदृढ पार्ने काम हुनुपर्छ । यी संस्थाहरूको मनोबल खस्किनेगरी राज्यका कुनै निकाय वा नागरिक समाजबाट कुनै कार्य गरिनु हुँदैन । कमजोर मनोबल भयो भने सुरक्षा निकायले काम गर्न सक्दैन, जसको सोभो असर सार्वभौमिकताको रक्षामा पर्दछ । वाक् स्वतन्त्रताको नाममा सुरक्षा निकायहरूको मान-मर्दन हुनेगरी विना आधार र पुष्ट्याइँ बोल्नुले सकल दर्जाका सुरक्षा कर्मचारीहरूको मनोबलको क्षयीकरण हुन्छ । यसबाट मुलुकको सुरक्षामा नकारात्मक असर पर्दछ भन्नेतर्फ आम नागरिकले विशेष संवेदनशील भएर सोच्नु जरुरी छ । यी सुरक्षा निकायहरूलाई अनुसन्धान र नवप्रवर्तनका कार्यमा पनि लगाउनुपर्छ । जसबाट उनीहरूको व्यावसायिक दक्षता बढ्नेछ, अनुशासन कायम हुनेछ र रणनीतिक प्रतिरोधहरू (Strategic Deterrence) को क्षमतामा वृद्धि हुनेछ ।
- सन्तुलित र चुस्त कूटनीतिको परिचालनले राष्ट्रियता खतरामा पर्ने सम्भावना रहँदैन । सन्तुलित कूटनीतिले दुवै पक्षलाई Win-Win को अवस्थामा पुऱ्याउँछ । सिंगापुरले अमेरिका र चीन दुवैसँग रणनीतिक कूटनीति र तटस्थताको विदेश नीतिलाई सफलतापूर्वक व्यवहारमा देखाएको छ । नेपालले सबैसँग मित्रता कसैसँग छैन शत्रुता (Amity with all enmity with none) को नीति लिएको छ । कमजोर सुरक्षा व्यवस्था र अस्थिर विदेश नीति रहेमा कुनै पनि देश बाह्य दबाबको सिकार हुन्छ ।
- राष्ट्रको पहिचान र राष्ट्रिय एकतालाई प्रवर्धन गर्ने कार्य उपर्युक्त सबालमा ज्यादै महत्त्वपूर्ण मानिन्छ ।

स्वीट्जरलैण्डले आफ्नो भाषिक विविधता हुँदाहुँदै पनि बहुभाषिक, सञ्जीय शासन प्रणाली र साभ्ना राष्ट्रिय पहिचानमार्फत एकता कायम राखेको छ । विविधता व्यवस्थापन कसरी गर्न सकिन्छ भन्ने विषयलाई स्वीट्जरलैण्डको अभ्यासबाट सिक्न सकिन्छ । सार्वभौमिकताको रक्षा राष्ट्रिय एकतासँग जोडिएको हुन्छ । राष्ट्रिय एकतामा परेको चिरा नै विदेशी प्रभुत्व प्रवेश गर्ने ढोका हो । यदि नागरिकहरू विभाजित छन् भने कुनै पनि राष्ट्रले आफ्नो सिमाना सुरक्षित राख्न सक्दैन । कारण आन्तरिक द्वन्द्वले त्यो शक्तिलाई क्षीण बनाउँछ, जसको आधारमा राष्ट्रिय अखण्डता अडेको हुन्छ ।

- सैद्धान्तिक पक्षबाट अध्ययन गर्दा यथार्थवादी, संरचनावादी र उदारवादी दृष्टिकोणले सार्वभौमिकताको संरक्षण र संवर्द्धनका लागि दिने विचारहरू फरक फरक रहे पनि समय सापेक्ष छन् । यथार्थवादीको दृष्टिमा- सार्वभौमिकता शक्ति, सैन्यबल र सैन्य गठबन्धनमार्फत कायम हुन्छ भने संरचनावादीको दृष्टिमा कानुनी वैधता, राष्ट्रिय पहिचान र साभ्ना मान्यताहरूमा सार्वभौमिकता निर्भर रहेको हुन्छ । यसैगरी उदारवादी दृष्टिमा- अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय संस्थाहरू र सहकार्यले सार्वभौमिकतालाई सुदृढ बनाउँछन् । यी तीनवटै दृष्टिकोणहरू वर्तमान समयको परिवर्तित भू-सामरिक र प्रविधि तथा विकसित अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय सम्बन्धमा नवउदार अर्थतन्त्रको प्रभाव र दबावअन्तर्गत कार्यान्वयन हुने गरेका छन् । अभै स्पष्ट रूपमा भन्नुपर्दा यथार्थवादी अवधारणाले कमजोर राष्ट्रहरूको सार्वभौमिकता तबसम्म मात्र सुरक्षित रहन्छ, जबसम्म उनीहरूले आफ्नो सुरक्षा शक्ति र रणनीतिक साभ्नेदारीलाई सुदृढ बनाउन सक्छन् । फिनल्याण्ड र सिंगापुर भूगोलमा सानो आकारका राष्ट्र हुँदाहुँदै पनि बलियो सुरक्षा नीतिले आफ्नो सार्वभौमसत्तालाई जोगाएका छन् । उदारवादी धारणाले वैश्विक सहकार्यको माध्यमबाट आफ्नो सार्वभौमिकता मजबुत बनाउन सकिन्छ भन्दछ । यसैगरी संरचनावादी दृष्टिकोणबाट कमजोर राष्ट्रको सार्वभौमिकता राष्ट्रिय एकता, सांस्कृतिक पहिचान र वैचारिक सहमतिमा सुदृढ हुन्छ । जब नागरिकहरूमा आपसी विश्वास र साभ्ना उद्देश्य हुन्छ तब बाह्य दबावले राष्ट्रको सार्वभौमिकता कमजोर पार्न सक्दैन । यहाँनेर राष्ट्र सञ्चका पूर्व महासचिव कोफी अन्नानले व्यक्त गरेका उद्गार सान्दर्भिक हुने देखिन्छ । उनले भनेका छन् - 'There is no development without security and no security without national unity' (सुरक्षाबिना विकास सम्भव छैन र राष्ट्रिय एकताबिना सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित हुँदैन) । उनले राष्ट्रिय एकताको कुरा गर्नुको पछाडि साना राष्ट्रको सार्वभौमसत्ता कमजोर नहोस् भन्ने आशयसँग जोडिएको छ ।
- राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको प्रत्याभूति तबसम्म हुँदैन जबसम्म देशका प्रत्येक नागरिकहरूमा देशभक्तिको भावना बलियो हुँदैन । देश प्रेमको भावना विकास गर्नका लागि भाषण वा कुराहरूले काम गर्दैनन् । यसको लागि राज्य हाँक्ने शासकीय संरचनामा बसेकाहरूको प्रतिबद्धता र सो बमोजिमको पत्यारिलो व्यवहार महत्त्वपूर्ण मानिन्छ । साथै, यस प्रयोजनका लागि समेत वर्तमान शिक्षा प्रणालीमा आमूल सुधारको आवश्यकता गर्नु ढिला भैसकेको छ । विद्यमान शिक्षाबाट देशप्रति माया गर्ने, आफ्नो सामाजिक मूल्य, मान्यता, संस्कृति र संस्कारको बारेमा जानकारी राख्ने, त्यसको पालना गर्ने, उच्च प्रविधिको ज्ञान दिने शिक्षाको अभाव देखिएको छ । प्रमाणपत्र मात्र बाँड्ने शिक्षाले दक्ष जनशक्ति उत्पादन गर्न सक्दैन । कोरा जनशक्तिले देश

विदेश जहाँ पनि उत्कृष्ट प्रदर्शन गर्न सक्दैन । त्यसको असर समाजमा पर्दछ । यसबाट समाज कमजोर हुने सम्भावना बढ्दछ । कमजोर समाजको सामाजिक ऐक्यबद्धता रूण हुन्छ । यसले सामाजिक विखण्डनको बाटो देखाउने र राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा खतरामा पर्ने भएकोले यसतर्फ वर्तमान शिक्षा प्रणालीमा सुधार गर्नका लागि संवेदनशील हुनु जरुरी छ ।

निष्कर्ष

राष्ट्रको सार्वभौमिकता भन्दा ठुलो विषय राज्य र त्यहाँका नागरिकहरूका लागि अरू केही हुँदैन । सार्वभौमिकताको सुरक्षा र रक्षा गर्ने काम यद्यपि सुरक्षा निकायहरूले गर्छन् तथापि अर्को पक्ष जो सबैभन्दा बलियो हुन्छ त्यो हो-उक्त राष्ट्रको अखण्डित र एक ढिक्काको रूपमा रहेका नागरिकहरू । सार्वभौमिकतालाई एउटा सानो दायरामा राखेर होइन, मुलुकको अस्तित्व र समग्र विकाससँग जोडेर राज्य र नागरिकको बृहत्तर हित हुने कार्यसँग आबद्ध गराउनु आवश्यक छ । राष्ट्रको सार्वभौमिकता तबसम्म सुरक्षित रहन्छ, जबसम्म उसको सुरक्षा प्रणाली बलियो हुन्छ, नागरिक सचेत र एकजुट हुन्छन् र नेतृत्व उत्तरदायी बन्छ । सार्वभौमिकताको रक्षा सरकारले मात्र गर्छ भन्ने होइन । राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा प्रत्येक नागरिकको कर्तव्य र जिम्मेवारी दुबै हो । जब जनता एकजुट हुन्छन्, शासन पारदर्शी र सदाचारयुक्त हुन्छ, सुरक्षा निकायहरू सबल हुन्छन् तब राष्ट्रको सार्वभौमिकता अविचल सुदृढ रहन्छ ।

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मोन्टेभिडिया राज्यहरूको अधिकार र कर्तव्यसम्बन्धी अभिसन्धि अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय कानूनमा एक आधारभूत सन्धि हो । २६ डिसेम्बर १९३३ मा उरुग्वेको मोन्टेभिडियोमा हस्ताक्षर गरिएको थियो । यसले राज्यको अर्थ के हो भन्ने कुरा परिभाषित गर्दछ र राज्यहरूले राख्ने अधिकार र जिम्मेवारीहरूको रूपरेखा प्रस्तुत गर्दछ ।

नेपालको संविधान (२०७२) धारा २

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✍ मोहन थापा

विषय प्रवेश

अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात आधुनिक नेपाल निर्माणकालीन योद्धा हुन्। वि.सं.१८०३ फागुन ५ मा पिता शिवरामसिंह बस्न्यातले साँगाचोकको युद्धमा वीरगति पाएपछि गोर्खा राज्यबाट 'मरवट' मा पालिएका र उमेर पुगेपछि गोर्खाली सेनामा सेवारम्भ गरेका बस्न्यात, बख्शी र काजी पदमा रहेर जीवनपर्यन्त नेपाल एकीकरण अभियानमा समर्पित भएर अतुलनीय योगदान दिन सफल नायक हुन्। बस्न्यात धेरै योगदान गरेर कम चर्चा र सम्मान पाएका सुयोग्य विभूति हुन्।

राष्ट्रनिर्माता श्री ५ बडामहाराजाधिराज पृथ्वीनारायण शाहको नेतृत्वमा वि.सं.१८०१ बाट थालनी भएको नेपाल एकीकरण अभियानमा सुरुवातदेखि अन्तिमचरणसम्म गोरखाका विविध जात, थरका पुस्ताले बलिदानी गरेका थिए भने पसिना र रगत पनि बगाएका थिए। तीमध्ये गोरखा निवासी भारद्वाज गोत्रका श्रीपाली वंशका बस्न्यात क्षेत्रीहरूले र अर्भ शिवरामसिंह बस्न्यातसहित उनका सन्तानले पुर्‍याएको योगदानबारे नेपालको सैनिक इतिहासमा न्यून चर्चा भएको छ।

धेरै युद्धमा नेतृत्व गरेका अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातको उच्च पद काजी हो। उनको जीवनीबारेको चर्चा आधुनिक नेपाल निर्माणका सिलसिलामा भएका युद्ध, तत्कालीन नेपाली सेनाको युद्ध शैली र एकीकरणकालीन वस्तुस्थितिको विवरणात्मक प्रस्तुति हो। तसर्थ, यस लेखमा वीर योद्धा अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातको वंश तथा पारिवारिक परिचय, उनको सैन्य सेवा, नेपाल एकीकरणका विभिन्न युद्ध मोर्चामा उनको सहभागिता तथा नेतृत्वदायी ठूलो भूमिकासहित बस्न्यातले अवलम्बन गरेको युद्ध नीतिबारे चर्चा गरिएको छ।

आनुवंशिक पृष्ठभूमि

मध्य एसियाबाट पूर्व लागेका खस जाति काश्मिर, गढवाल, कुमाउ भएर महाकाली नदी तरेर पूर्वको भूमिमा बसोवास गर्न थालेका थिए। अध्येताहरूका अनुसार गण्डकीपश्चिमको भूभागमा विक्रम संवत्को सुरुवातदेखि पाँचौँ शताब्दीसम्मका बभ्राड, बाजुरा अछाम आसपासमा खप्तड भग्नावशेष, श्रीकोट भग्नावशेष, श्रीपा (धुलीकाणा-सैपाल) भग्नावशेष, खाँडाचक्र भग्नावशेष, कोल्टी भग्नावशेषबाट जुम्लाको सिँजा राजधानी बनाएर नागराजले

✍ लेखक नेपाली सेनाका अवकाशप्राप्त सुवेदार हुनुहुन्छ।

स्थापना गरेको खस साम्राज्य अर्थात् सिँजा सभ्यताअधिको अवस्थाबारे थाहा पाउन सकिन्छ। लेखक पूर्णप्रकाश नेपाल 'यात्री' का अनुसार, सिँजा सभ्यताभन्दा अघि बभाङ्ग, बाजुरा, अछाम वरपरको भूभागमा विक्रम संवत् को पाँच सय आसपाससम्म खप्तड सभ्यता थियो। खप्तडी सभ्यतामा खप्तडी, खुलाल, कालिकोटे, सिँजापति र श्रीपाली समेत पाँच क्षत्री समुदायको वर्चस्व थियो। यी पाँच समुदाय पछि थर कायम भए।

श्रीकोट र खप्तडी सभ्यताको विघटनपछि पहिले शासक रहेका समुदायका सन्ततिहरू सिँजा साम्राज्यका राजा नागराज र उनका उत्तराधिकारीहरूको शासनमा स्थानीय सामन्त र सेनानायक भएर राज्य निर्माण एवम् सुरक्षामा समर्पित थिए। त्यसताकाका राज्य सैन्यशक्तिमा टिकेका हुन्थे। खस जातिले प्राचीनकालदेखि नै लडाकु जातिका रूपमा ख्याति कमाउँदै आएको थियो। मेसापोटामिया, सुसान, अफगान, बलुच, कश्मिर, गढवाल, कुमाउ भएर महाकाली पूर्व खप्तड र सैपाल हिमाल आसपासमा बसोवास गर्न आइपुगेका खस सन्ततिहरूमा लडाकुपन कायम थियो। पूर्वजको राज्य विघटनपछि पनि, श्रीपालीहरू खस साम्राज्यकालभर प्रभावशाली थिए। काम वा पेसा, क्षमता वा दक्षता, पहुँच अर्थात् प्रभाव र योगदानका आधारमा स्थल र भूमिका परिवर्तन हुने सिलसिलामा भारद्वाज गोत्रका श्रीपाली वंशका क्षत्री (योद्धा) हरू (श्रीपाली) बस्न्यात थरबाट चिनिए र फैलिए। स्थल वा थलो (बसोवास) र थर परिवर्तन भए तापनि श्रीपाली पुरुषहरूको मुख्य पेशा र परिचय सैनिक थियो।

विक्रम संवत् ११५०-५५ तिर स्थापना भएको सिँजा साम्राज्य वि.सं.१४४८-५० सम्म अस्तित्वमा थियो। सिँजा साम्राज्य विघटन भएपछि कर्णाली क्षेत्रमा २२ र गण्डक क्षेत्रमा २४ अलग राज्य स्थापना भए। साम्राज्य विघटनसँगै उत्पन्न असुरक्षा र खाद्यान्नका लागि सुरक्षितस्थल खोजीमा वासस्थान परिवर्तन गर्नु त्यसबेला बाध्यता थियो। यो बाध्यतामा पश्चिम नेपालको पहाडी भूभागबाट खसहरू समूह-समूहमा पूर्वतर्फ बढ्न थाले। यसै क्रममा श्रीपाली क्षत्री वंशका केही परिवार बसोवासका लागि गोरखा आइपुगे। तिनका सन्तानमध्येका एक बडावीर योद्धा शिवरामसिंह बस्न्यात थिए।

लेखकद्वय हनुमानसिंह बस्न्यात र पूर्णमानसिंह बस्न्यात (**श्रीपाली बस्न्यात-परिचय (इतिहास तथा वंशावली)**), सम्पा.रामकाजी बस्न्यात, काठमाडौँ: श्रीपाली बस्न्यात समाज, २०५८) का अनुसार, गोरखामा श्रीपाली बस्न्यातहरू लमजुडबाट आएका थिए। शिवरामसिंह बस्न्यातका पिता जयसिंह, उनका पिता, जाधौसिंह, उनका पिता हम्वीरसिंह, उनका पनि पिता वीरनारसिंह (भीष्मसिंह) हुन्। वंशावलीअनुसार, शिवरामसिंह बस्न्यातका पूर्वजहरू द्रव्य शाहले वि.सं.१६१६ मा गोरखा राज्य स्थापना गरेको आसपासको समयबाट गोरखामा बसोवास गर्न थालेका थिए।

शिवरामसिंह बस्न्यात पृथ्वीनारायण शाहका विश्वासपात्र थिए। पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले बनारस यात्रामा शिवरामसिंहलाई साथै लगेका थिए। गोरखा राज्यले कान्तिपुर अधीनको नुवाकोट विजय गर्दादेखि काठमाडौँ उपत्यका वरपरका बेलकोट, शिवपुरी, नालदुम, महादेवपोखरी, साँगाचोक लगायतका भूभाग विजयमा गोर्खाली सेनाको सेनापतिको भूमिका निर्वाह गरेका शिवरामसिंह बस्न्यात गोर्खाली सेनामा विश्वास गरिएका थोरैमध्येका वीर योद्धा थिए।

इतिहास शिरोमणि बाबुराम आचार्यले शिवरामसिंह बस्न्यातलाई 'सेनापति' सरदार सम्बोधन गरेका छन् । वि.सं. १८०१ असोज १५ मा गोरखाले कान्तिपुर राज्य अधीनको नुवाकोट र केही दिनपछि बेलकोट बिजय गरेपछि, शिवरामसिंह बस्न्यात निरन्तर गोर्खाली सेनाको नेतृत्व गरेर युद्धमा खटिएका थिए । यसबीच शिवरामसिंह बस्न्यात आफू मातहतका सेनाको नेतृत्व गरेर, साँखु चाँगु क्षेत्रबाट नुवाकोट फर्कने क्रममा वि.सं. १८०३ फागुन ५ गते कान्तिपुर राज्यका सेनापति तौढिक प्रधान नेतृत्वको सेनाले साँगाचोकमा राति बास बसेको समयमा भुक्क्याएर उनीसहित केही सङ्ख्याका गोर्खाली सेनामाथि आक्रमण गरेर हत्या गरिदिएका थिए ।

शिवरामसिंह बस्न्यातकी पत्नीको नाम शूरप्रभा हो । बस्न्यात दम्पतिका नाहरसिंह, केहरसिंह, अभिमानसिंह र धौकलसिंह समेत चार छोरा थिए । शिवरामसिंह बस्न्यातले वीरगति पाउँदा छोराहरू नाबालक थिए । बाबुराम आचार्य (श्री ५ बडामहाराजाधिराज पृथ्वीनारायण शाहको संक्षिप्त जीवनी, ललितपुर : साभा प्रकाशन, २०६१, पृ.१७१), का अनुसार पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले उनकी पत्नी शूरप्रभालाई भेटेर सान्त्वना दिँदै, बालक छोराहरूको रक्षा र शिक्षाको अभिभारा आफूले लिए । शाहको प्रतिज्ञा र गोरखा राज्यको तत्कालीन नीतिअनुरूप शिवरामसिंहका छोराहरू मरवटमा पालिए र उमेर पुगेपछि क्रमैसँग गोरखा राज्यका सरकारी सेवा/सेनामा काम गर्न थाले ।

अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात

शिवरामसिंह बस्न्यात र श्रीमती शूरप्रभा बस्न्यातका साइँला छोरा अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातको जन्म वि.सं. १८०१ मा गोर्खामा भएको थियो । अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात साढे दुई वर्षको छँदा पिताले वीरगति पाएपछि उनी आन्तरिकरूपमा माता शूरप्रभाबाट र समग्रमा तत्कालीन गोर्खाको नीतिअनुरूप मरवटमा पालिए । गोर्खामा मरवटमा पालिएका सैनिकका सन्तान र सैन्य भारदारका पुरुष सन्तानलाई ८-१० वर्षको उमेर पूरा भएपछि युद्धसम्बन्धी शिक्षा दिइन्थ्यो । यसअन्तर्गत जेठाबुढालगायतबाट युवाहरूलाई शत्रु सेनामाथि आक्रमण गर्ने, शत्रुको आक्रमणबाट बच्ने र हातहतियार चलाउने अभ्यास गराइन्थ्यो । यही नीतिअनुरूप अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातले गोर्खामा सैन्य विद्या अथवा युद्धसम्बन्धी शिक्षा हासिल गरेका थिए ।

युद्धमा सहभागिता

नेपालको सैनिक इतिहासका अनुसार अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात सेनामा सक्रिय हुनुअगाडि गोर्खा राज्यको राज्यकोषको खर्च आदेशबमोजिम उपलब्ध गराउने जिम्मेवारीमा थिए ।

अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातले भाग लिएको पहिलो युद्ध कुन थियो भन्नेमा लेखकबीच एकमत छैन । बाबुराम आचार्यले पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले वि.सं. १८१९ मा केहरसिंह बस्न्यात र अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातलाई बख्शी पद दिएर मकवानपुरको लडाइँमा खटिएका सैन्य दलमा सम्मिलित गराएको उल्लेख गरेका छन् । 'बख्शी' पद सरदारभन्दा माथि र काजीभन्दा मुनिको थियो ।

वि.सं. १८१९ भदौ ८ गते आक्रमण गरेर ९ गते शनिवार गोर्खाले मकवानपुर विजय गरेको थियो । मकवानपुर विजय गर्ने गोर्खाली सेनाको दलमा चौतरिया महोद्दमकीर्ति शाह, चौतरिया दलमर्दन शाह, काजी

दलजित शाह, काजी शूरप्रताप शाह, काजी वंशराज पाँडे, बख्सी केहरसिंह बस्न्यात, बख्शी अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात, कुलानन्द जैसी, नाहरसिंह बस्न्यात, नन्दु सरदारलगायतका सेनानायकहरूको नेतृत्व रहेको थियो । आचार्यका अनुसार अभिमानसिंहले भाग लिएको पहिलो युद्ध मकवानपुरको हो ।

पूर्व विजयका नायक

काठमाडौँ उपत्यकाबाट (सुनकोशीभन्दा) पूर्व, उत्तरमा तिब्बत र सिक्किम, पूर्वमा टिस्टा नदीसम्म र दक्षिणमा बङ्गालको समथर भूभागलाई कम मानवीय क्षतिमा नेपालमा एकीकृत गर्ने अभियानको सैन्य नेतृत्व अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातले गरेका थिए ।

वि.सं. १८२५/२६ मा काठमाडौँ उपत्यकामाथि पूर्ण विजय भएपछि पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले वि.सं. १८२७ मा गण्डक क्षेत्रका चौबिसे राज्यमाथि अधिकार गर्न सेना पठाए । काजी वंशराज पाँडे र बख्शी केहरसिंह बस्न्यात नेतृत्वमा गएका नेपाली सेनाले लमजुङ, तनहुँ, कास्की राज्यलाई कज्याए (आश्रित बनाए) रिसिङ, ढोर, गरहुँ, पल्लो नुवाकोट, भीरकोट, पैयुँ, सतहुँ लगायतका भूभागमाथि विजय गरेका थिए । इतिहासकार आचार्य (श्री ५ बडामहाराजाधिराज पृथ्वीनारायण शाहको संक्षिप्त जीवनी, ललितपुर : साभा प्रकाशन, २०६१, पृ.३९७) का अनुसार पर्वतको अगुवाइमा नेपाल/गोरखा विरोधी चौबिसे राज्यका संयुक्त सेनासँग वि.सं.१८२८ पुष ५ मा सतहुँमा भएको युद्धमा नेपाली सेनाका सेनापति बख्शी केहरसिंह बस्न्यातले वीरगति पाए, काजी वंशराज पाँडेलाई विपक्षी सेनाले पक्राउ गरेर पर्वतमा कैद गर्‍यो । नेपाली सेनाको हार भएपछि त्यसअघि नेपाली सेनाले विजय गरेर आश्रित बनाएका गण्डक क्षेत्रका राज्यहरू पुनः स्वतन्त्र भए ।

सतहुँमा हार भएपछि पश्चिमतर्फको सैनिक अभियान स्थगित गरियो । त्यसबेला काठमाडौँ उपत्यकाबाट पूर्वतर्फ विजयपुर र चौदण्डीमा सेन राजा थिए । तर राजा र दिवान (मन्त्री) को विवादका कारण असन्तुष्ट पक्षले विहार, बङ्गाल (कलकत्ता र पटना) मा शासन गरिरहेका बेलायतको इस्ट इण्डिया कम्पनीसँग सैनिक सहायता मागेर, शक्ति पुनःस्थापन गर्न असफल प्रयास गरिरहेका थिए । यी घटनाक्रमहरूलाई नियालिरहेका पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले पूर्व विजयका लागि अनुकूल समय आएको महसुस गरी त्यसतर्फ आवश्यक सैनिक तयारी गर्न थाले । पृथ्वीनारायण शाहसमक्ष पूर्वका विजयपुर र चौदण्डी (खार्पा) का हरिनन्द उपाध्याय पोखरेल, त्रिलोचन उपाध्याय र स्वरूपसिंह कार्की भक्तपुर विजयअधिदेखि नै सम्पर्कमा थिए । पूर्वको राजकाज, किराँत समुदायका खम्बु सैनिकको हतियार, शक्ति आदि वस्तुस्थिति बुझ्न शाहले गुप्तरूपमा पहिले नै बाङ्ग्या बस्न्यात लगायतका भारदारलाई पठाएका थिए । आफूले पठाएका मानिसले त्यताको वस्तुस्थिति बुझेर समाचार ल्याएका र पश्चिमतर्फ हार भएपछि शाहले बख्शी अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात, सरदार रामकृष्ण कुँवर, सरदार अमरसिंह थापा, सरदार पारथ भण्डारी लगायत सेनानायकको नेतृत्वमा पूर्व विजयका लागि सैनिक खटाएका थिए । यो वि.सं. १८२८ अन्तिमतिरको कुरा हो ।

इतिहास शिरोमणि बाबुराम आचार्यले पूर्व विजय अभियानमा बख्शी अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात प्रमुख सेनापतिको रूपमा मनोनित गरिए भनी उल्लेख गरेका छन् (नेपालको संक्षिप्त वृत्तान्त, सम्पा. श्रीकृष्ण आचार्य, दोस्रो संस्करण, २०६३, पृ.१८७/१८८) । तत्कालीन समयमा कुनै भूभाग विजय अभियानका खातिर खटाइएका

सैनिक दलको मुख्य कमाण्डर वा सेनापतिमा योग्य सैनिक योद्धालाई छनौट वा नियुक्त गर्ने अभ्यास थियो । त्यसबेला नेपाली सेनाका प्रमुख योद्धा काजी वंशराज पाँडे शत्रु सेनाको कैदमा थिए भने सेनापति बख्शी केहरसिंह बस्न्यात (अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातका दाजु) ले वीरगति पाएका थिए । शाहले वीरगति पाएका सेनापति केहरसिंहका भाइलाई सेनापति नियुक्त गरेर, शोक बेहोरेका योद्धाका सन्तानलाई सान्त्वना र हौसला दिन खोजेको देखिन्छ । तत्कालीन समयमा नेपाली सेना पूर्व विजय अभियानमा मात्र युद्धरत रहेको र सो युद्धमा बख्शी अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातलाई नेपाली सेनाको सेनापति नियुक्त गरिएको थियो ।

पूर्व विजयमा खटाइएका नेपाली सैनिक दुई अलग दलमा बाँडिएर फरक समयमा प्रस्थान गरेका थिए । विजयपुर (धरान) केही पूर्व र समथर भूभागमा थियो भने चौदण्डीको राजधानी अम्बरपुर भित्री मधेशमा पर्दथ्यो । अम्बरपुरको सुरक्षाका लागि सेन राजाले मगर समुदायका सैनिकलाई जिम्मा दिएका थिए । चौदण्डी राज्यको पहाडी भूभागलाई त्यसताका माझ किराँत भनिन्थ्यो । माझ किराँतमा खम्बु समुदायको बाहुल्य भए तापनि खस समुदायका क्षत्री, ब्राह्मण, दलित आदिको पनि बसोवास थियो । खम्बु बाहुल्य त्यस क्षेत्रमा बसोवास गर्ने क्षेत्री ब्राह्मणले किराँत समुदायबाट आफूहरू अपहेलित र असुरक्षित महसुस गरेकाले, हरिनन्द उपाध्याय पोखरेल, स्वरूपसिंह कार्की लगायतका प्रभावशाली व्यक्तिहरूले आन्तरिक रूपमा पृथ्वीनारायण शाहका सेनालाई सहयोग गरेका थिए ।

काठमाडौँबाट प्रस्थान गरेका नेपाली सैनिकमध्ये, सरदार रामकृष्ण कुँवर र सरदार अमरसिंह थापा नेतृत्वमा खटाइएको सैनिक दल पहाडको बाटो चौदण्डी विजयका लागि केही दिन अघि प्रस्थान गरेको थियो भने बख्शी अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात नेतृत्वमा सरदार पारथ भण्डारी, मातहतको सेना केही दिनपछि मकवानपुरको बाटो तराईको भूभाग भएर अघि बढेको थियो । पहिलो समूहमा गएको नेपाली सेनालाई हरिनन्द पोखरेल लगायतका स्थानीयले सुनकोशी र दुधकोशी नदी तर्न डुङ्गा बनाउन लगाएर सहयोग गरेका थिए ।

नेपाली सेनाले पहिलो चरणमा माझ किराँतमा आक्रमण गरेको थियो । सरदार रामकृष्ण कुँवर नेतृत्वको सेनालाई क्षत्री, ब्राह्मण, दलित समुदायले साथ दिए । त्यस इलाकाको सुरक्षा जिम्मा चौतारा अजित रायको थियो तर उनीसँग स्थायी सैनिक थिएनन् । युद्धका समयमा भारा उठाउने चलन थियो । उनले बलियो सैनिक दल तयार गर्न सकेका थिएनन् । तर पनि रावा खोलामा चर्तित राय र पामा खोलामा अटल राय नेतृत्वमा खम्बु युवाहरू एकीकृत भएर धनुकाँड सहितका हतियारले नेपाली सेनामाथि जाइलागेर, सकेसम्म प्रतिकारको प्रयास गरे । खम्बु योद्धाहरू शत्रु सेनामाथि जडीबुटीबाट बनाइएको विषमा चोपिएका तीखा बाणहरू प्रहार गर्न अभ्यस्त थिए, यी विषालु बाणहरू मानिसको शरीरमा रोपिएमा ज्यान जान सक्दथ्यो तथापि त्यसबेला युद्धमा खटिने नेपाली सेनासँग आधुनिक बन्दुक थिए । बन्दुकको गोलीको तुलनामा धनुकाँड धेरै टाढासम्म मार गर्न सक्दैनथ्यो । तर लुकेर आक्रमण गर्ने खम्बु योद्धाहरूले नेपाली सेनालाई अघि बढ्न दिएनन् । यो समाचार काठमाडौँ आइपुगेपछि सुबेदार (पछि काजी) शिवनारायण खत्री नेतृत्वमा आधा कम्पनी थप सैनिक गएर खम्बु सेनालाई तितरबितर पारिदिएको थियो । त्यसपछि नेपाली सेनाले सुनकोशी र दुधकोशी उत्तर पूर्वका पहाडी इलाका रावा, हलेसी, मभुवा, कुलुन, दिङ्ला (भोजपुर) सम्म अधिकार गर्न सफल भयो । यतिबेलासम्म अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात नेतृत्वको सैनिक दल पूर्वको घटनाक्रम नियालेर, मकवानपुरमा तयारी अवस्थामा थियो ।

माझ किराँतको पहाडी भूभागमा पूरा अधिकार भएपछि बाँकी वा दक्षिणको भित्री मधेसको भूभाग र विजयपुरमा अधिकार गर्न पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले इस्ट इन्डिया कम्पनी सरकारका गभर्नर जनरल वारेन हेस्टिङ्ग लगायत अरू अङ्ग्रेज अफिसरसँग पत्र व्यवहार गरेका थिए । किनकि ती राज्यको दक्षिणतर्फको भूभाग कम्पनी सरकार अधीनको भूभागसँग जोडिएको थियो । शाह अङ्ग्रेजलाई नचिढ्याइकन सकेसम्म खुसी बनाएर सरसल्लाहमा ती भूभागमा अधिकार गर्न चाहन्थे ।

कम्पनी सरकारलाई पत्रमार्फत समन्वय गरेपछि तराईको बाटो भएर अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात नेतृत्वमा तुलो सैनिक दल पूर्व प्रस्थान गरेको थियो । यो सेना चौदण्डी राज्य अधीनको तराई भूभाग नपुग्दै त्यहाँका राजा कर्ण सेन भागेर विजयपुर पुगेका थिए । राजा कर्ण सेनका सैनिकले नेपाली सेनासँग युद्ध गर्न नसकेर राजधानी अम्बरपुर छाडी भागेकाले चौदण्डी नेपालमा विलय भयो । यो वि.सं. १८३० को कुरा हो ।

चौदण्डीमा नेपाली सेनाको कब्जा भएपछि विजित राज्यमा बसोवास गर्ने जनताको धन र ज्यानमाथि अन्याय नगर्ने वा उनीहरूको जीउधनको सुरक्षा गर्नु नेपाली सेनाको पहिलो कर्तव्य थियो । तसर्थ बख्शी अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातले 'अधि तिमीहरू राजा कर्ण सेनका रैयत थियौ । राजाका तर्फबाट सैनिक भएर तिमीहरू हामी सैनिकसँग लड्यौ तापनि तिमीहरूका राजा भागेका हुनाले अब हाम्रा रैयत भयौ । तिमीहरूको घर, खेत, धन, दौलत सबै सुरक्षित छन्, भोगचलन गर्दैरहनू । तिमीहरूका परम्परादेखि चलिआएका रीतिथितिमा रहू' भन्ने सन्देश राजा पृथ्वीनारायण शाहतर्फबाट जारी गरिएको भावमा स्थानीय कटुवालमार्फत प्रवाह गरिदिएका थिए । बख्शी बस्न्यातको यस कदमबाट विजित भूभागमा शान्ति स्थापना भएर नेपाली सेनाप्रति जनतामा विश्वास बढ्नुको साथै नेपालको विजय स्थायी हुन सहयोग पुगेको थियो । चौदण्डी विजयपछि अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात र पारथ भण्डारीले नेपाली सेनालाई साथ सहयोग दिने हरिनन्द उपाध्याय पोखरेललाई पत्र लेखेर, उनका बाँधा, बिर्ता थामिदिने छौं भनी आश्वस्त तुल्याएका थिए ।

चौदण्डी राज्य अधीनको अम्बरपुरमा नेपाली सेनाका अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात नेतृत्वको सेनाले अधिकार गरेको खबर विहारको पटनामा हाकिम रहेका अङ्ग्रेज अफिसर जार्ज बेन्सिस्टार्टले पाएपछि उनले पृथ्वीनारायण शाहलाई र पछि अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातलाई अलग अलग पत्र लेखेका थिए । त्यसताका सुदूरपश्चिमका हरिद्वारबाट लुटेरा संन्यासीहरूको दल पहाडको काखैकाख त्रिवेणीघाट, बेतिया, मकवानपुर भएर पूर्वको कोशी पारिका अङ्ग्रेज अधीनमा रहेका भूभागका व्यापारी सेठहरूको पसल, उद्योग, कोठी, गोदाम आदिमा लुटपाट गरेर उत्तरका जङ्गल र पहाडी भूभागमा लुकुद्धे । व्यापारीको अनुरोधमा तिनीहरूलाई पक्राउ गर्न आएको अङ्ग्रेज सेनाले भेट्न नसकेर हैरान भएका थिए । पटकपटकको यसप्रकारको घटनाबाट अङ्ग्रेज अधिकारीहरू वाक्कदिवक्क भएको, चौदण्डीमा स्थिर सरकार नभएकोले समन्वय गर्न कठिन भइरहेको अवस्थामा नेपाली सेनाले विजय गरेको त्यस भूभागमा अङ्ग्रेज सेनालाई कब्जा गर्न अनुरोध भइरहेको थियो । तर अङ्ग्रेज अधिकारीहरूको ध्यान र महत्त्व अन्यत्रतिर थियो । यस अवस्थामा पटनाका अङ्ग्रेज अधिकारीले पृथ्वीनारायण शाह र अम्बरपुरमा तैनाथ रहेका नेपाली सेनाका बख्शी अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातलाई पत्र लेखेर ती लुटेरा संन्यासीहरूको लुट र ज्यादती रोक्न अनुरोध गरेका थिए ।

त्यसबेला पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले अङ्ग्रेजसँग वैमनस्य कम गरेर थप भूभाग विजय गर्न र नेपालको विजयलाई स्थायी राख्ने रणनीति अवलम्बन गरेका थिए। ती लुटेरा संन्यासी दलले कुनै समय पृथ्वीनारायण शाहलाई पनि दुःख दिएका थिए। अङ्ग्रेज अधिकारीको पत्र आएपछि इस्ट इन्डिया कम्पनीसँगको सम्बन्ध राम्रो हुने अपेक्षाले लुटेरा संन्यासी दलमाथि कारबाही गर्न पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले आदेश दिएपछि अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात नेतृत्वको सेनाले वि.सं. १८३० को हिँउदमा महोत्तरीसम्म आएर तिनीहरूमाथि दमन गरेका थिए।

यसै समयमा सिक्किमका सेनाले पल्लो किराँततर्फ निरन्तर आक्रमण गरेर त्यहाँका लिम्बूहरूलाई दुःख दिइरहेका थिए। यसर्थ स्थानीय लिम्बूहरूले त्यसतर्फ रहेका नेपाली सेनाका सरदार रामकृष्ण कुँवरसमक्ष सैनिक सहयोग मागेका थिए। यसपछि अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात र पारथ भण्डारी नेतृत्वको नेपाली सेनाले रामकृष्ण कुँवरसँग समन्वय गरेर पल्लो किराँत पुगेर तिब्बतको सीमासम्म र तमोर नदीसम्म नेपालको सीमा पुऱ्याए। दुई नेपाली सेनानायकको संयोजनबाट सिक्किमका सेनाबाट हुनसक्ने त्रास निरूपण भएपछि त्यस भूभागका सम्पूर्ण लिम्बूहरूले नेपालको अधीनता स्वीकार गर्न सहमत भएका थिए। त्यसपछि सम्पूर्ण लिम्बूवानमा नेपालको अधिकार भयो। यो खुसीमा अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातसहितका पूर्व विजय अभियानमा सक्रिय नेपाली सेनाका कमाण्डरहरूलाई काठमाडौँबाट पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले पठाएको पत्र योगी नरहरिनाथले इतिहास प्रकाशमा सन्धिपत्र सङ्ग्रह, भाग १, पृ.१३ मा प्रकाशन गरेर यस तथ्यलाई जीवन्त बनाएका छन्।

लिम्बूवान नेपालको भएपछि नेपालको सीमा पूर्वमा सिक्किमसँग जोडियो। सिक्किमका राजाले नेपाली सेनासँग डराएर आफ्ना देवानका छोरालाई अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातसमक्ष सुलहको कुरा गर्न पठाए। जवाफमा अभिमानसिंहले पृथ्वीनारायण शाहको मनसाय अनुसार इलाम नेपाललाई दिएमा सिक्किम र नेपालबीच राम्रो सम्बन्ध हुनसक्ने उपाय बताए। अभिमानसिंहको कुरामा सिक्किम सहमत भयो र इलाममा नेपालको अधिकार भयो। यसपछि नेपाली सेनाले अङ्ग्रेजको अधिकार क्षेत्रभन्दा बाहिरको भूभाग, पूर्वमा टिस्टासम्मको विस्तृत भूभागमा अधिकार गरेको थियो।

पूर्व विजय अभियानमा अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातसँग सरदार रामकृष्ण कुँवर, सरदार अमरसिंह थापा, सरदार पारथ भण्डारी, सरदार बलि बानियाँ, कीर्तिमानसिंह खवाससहितका सुयोग्य योद्धाहरू थिए, तर समग्र विजय अभियानको नेतृत्व अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातले गरेका थिए। पृथ्वीनारायण शाहसँग समन्वय गरेर मातहतका सैनिक कमाण्डरहरूको साथ, सुभाब र सल्लाहमा बस्न्यातले अत्यन्त सुभ्रुअपनाएर दक्षिणतर्फको महाशक्ति अङ्ग्रेज तथा उत्तरको तिब्बतसँग सतर्क भएर सुनकोशी नदीभन्दा पूर्वदेखि टिस्टा नदीसम्मको भूभाग नेपालमा मिलाउन सफल भएका थिए।

पृथ्वीनारायण शाहको राज्यकालपछि चौदण्डी र विजयपुरका राजाकी विधवा रानी, राजाका भूतपूर्व मन्त्रीलगायतका भारदारहरूले सिक्किम र इस्ट इन्डिया कम्पनी सरकारको सेनाको सहयोग तथा पाल्पा र चौबिसे समूहका राजाहरूको सहयोगमा चौदण्डी र विजयपुर राज्य ब्युताउन भरमग्दुर प्रयास गरेका थिए। उनीहरूबाट हुनसक्ने सम्भावित खतरालाई मध्यनजर गरी समयमै अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात नेतृत्वमा सैनिक दल खट्टिएको थियो। एकीकरणको प्रारम्भदेखि उक्त इलाकामा रहेर वस्तुस्थिति बुझेकाले बस्न्यात ती भूभागका एकीकरण विरोधी गतिविधि नियन्त्रण गर्न सफल भए।

अन्य युद्धहरूमा सहभागिता

वि.सं. १८३१ माघ १ गते पृथ्वीनारायण शाहको देहावसान भएपछि उनका पुत्र प्रतापसिंह शाह राजा भए । उनको राज्यकालमा पूर्व विजयमा सफल भएर विजित भूभागमा शान्ति सुरक्षाको जिम्मेवारी सम्हालेका अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात नेपालका बागी भएका भूतपूर्व सेन राजाका मन्त्री बुद्धिकर्ण राईलाई नियन्त्रण गर्न सफल भएका थिए । पूर्वको विजित क्षेत्रमा खतरा उत्पन्न गर्नसक्ने भनिएका राइको समस्या सदाका लागि पन्छाउन सफल भएपछि र पूर्वको ठुलो आमदानी हुने जमिन नेपाललाई हात लगाउन महत्त्वपूर्ण योगदान गरेकोमा खुसी भएर प्रतापसिंह शाहले आफूले गरेको पजनीको समयमा अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातलाई 'काजी' पद दिए ।

पूर्वमा नेपाली सेनाको तैनाथ लिएर बसेका अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातलाई सेनासहित बोलाएर तनहुँको अधीनमा रहेको उपरदाङ्गढी, कविलासपुर, सोमेश्वरगढी लगायत हाल चितवनमा पर्ने भूभाग विजयका लागि खटाइएको थियो । अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातले वर्षातको परवाह नगरी पूर्वबाट सैनिकसहित आएर काजी स्वरूपसिंह कार्की, रामकृष्ण कुँवर, बलि वानियाँ सहितका नेपाली सेनाका कमाण्डरहरूको सहयोगमा वि.सं. १८३४ साउन ३ र २६ गते तनहुँका सैनिकमाथि आक्रमण गरी पूरै चितवन प्रदेशलाई नेपालमा मिलाएका थिए ।

प्रतापसिंह शाहको राज्यकालमा नेपालमा एकीकृत भएको चितवन प्रदेश मात्र हो । प्रतापसिंह शाह अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातसँग खुसी र सन्तुष्ट थिए । शाहले अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातले बख्शी हुनुपूर्व राजाको आदेशमा गरेको राज्यकोषको रकम खर्च निकासको हिसाबकिताब पछि कुनै दाबी वा मुद्दा नलाने गरी सबै फारखती गरिदिनुका साथै चितवन प्रदेश दख्खल भएपछि बारामा बिर्ता दिने वचन दिएका थिए ।

वि.सं. १८३४ मा राजा प्रतापसिंह शाहको देहान्त भएपछि नाबालक राजा रणबहादुर शाहको नायबी सम्हालेकी महारानी राजेन्द्रलक्ष्मीको पहलमा पश्चिमतर्फ एकीकरण अभियान सुरु भयो । यसक्रममा वि.सं. १८३९ मा लमजुङ विजय युद्धमा काजी अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात सहभागी थिए ।

महारानी राजेन्द्रलक्ष्मीले लमजुङ, तनहुँ र कास्की विजयपछि पाल्पा विजयका लागि काजी अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात नेतृत्वमा अमरसिंह थापा, त्रिलोचन खवास, पारथ भण्डारीसहितका सेनानायकसँग पाँच कम्पनी सेना खटाएकी थिइन् । यो सैनिक दलले वि.सं. १८४० चैत १ मा पाल्पा अधीनका बुटवल, सिलुवापिलुवा, प्रभास, नाहुन लगायतका भूभाग विजय गरेको थियो ।

अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातले चौबिसे समूहको शक्तिशाली राज्य पर्वतको नेतृत्वमा वि.सं. १८४१ असार १२ मा लमजुङको मकैडाँडाको युद्धमा नेतृत्व गरेका थिए । सो युद्ध नेपाल एकीकरण अभियानअन्तर्गत पश्चिम विजयको महत्त्वपूर्ण युद्ध थियो । मकैडाँडाको युद्धमा नेपाली सेना विजयी भएपछि पश्चिमतर्फ नेपाल एकीकरणले स्थायित्व पाएको हो ।

मकैडाँडाको युद्धपछि कास्कीमाथि वि.सं. १८४२ जेठमा पूर्ण र अन्तिम विजयको नेतृत्व अभिमानसिंहले गरेका थिए (त्रिरत्न मानन्धर र अरू, **नेपाल एकीकरणको इतिहास**, जज्ञी अड्डा, २०७७, पृ. १३२) । त्यसपछि वि.सं. १८४२ असारमा अभिमानसिंह नेतृत्वको सेनाले सतहुँ ढोर, पैयुँ, गरहुँ, रिसिङ, चरिकोट, भीरकोट, धिरिङ लगायतका भूभाग विजय गरेको थियो ।

वि.सं. १८४२ असारमा महारानी राजेन्द्रलक्ष्मीको देहान्त भएपछि राजकुमार बहादुर शाहले राजा रणबहादुर शाहको नायबी सम्हाले । बहादुर शाहले वि.सं. १८४२ माघ १० मा गठन गरेको नयाँ भारदारी सभामा अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात र नरु शाहलाई काजी पदबाट हटाएर बलभद्र शाह र शिवनारायण खत्रीलाई नियुक्त गरेका थिए । अर्को वर्षको पजनीमा अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात काजी पदमा मुकरर भए ।

बहादुर शाह नेतृत्वमा चौबिसे समूहका केही र बाइसी राज्य नेपालमा एकीकृत भए । बहादुर शाहको नायबीकालमा अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातको सैनिक सक्रियता र युद्ध सहभागिता कम देखिन्छ । पछि वि.सं. १८४८-४९ मा भएको नेपाल तिब्बत चीन युद्धमा काजी अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातले पनि लडेका थिए । सम्भवतः अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातले लडेको यो अन्तिम युद्ध थियो ।

बहादुर शाहको नायबीकाल (रणबहादुर शाहको राज्यकाल) मा काजी अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातलाई वरियापूर्व, टिस्टा पश्चिमको देवानी, २१ कम्पनीमध्ये १ कम्पनी र कबिला (केटाकेटी) राख्नलाई सिन्धुलीथुम १ समेतको खानी (जागिर) दिइएको थियो । अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात लामो समयसम्म दरबारका विश्वासी थिए । रणबहादुर शाहले नेपाल एकीकरणका सिलसिलामा पूर्व सप्तरीको पहाड अम्बरपुर, मोरङ, कमला दुधकोशी, डाडरभारको तालुकी, मकवानपुर लगायतका इलाका विजय गर्दाका खर्च भएका हिसाबकिताबहरू बुभी फारखती गरिदिएका कागजहरू पाइएको छ । यसबाट अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातलाई हिसाबकिताबमा राजदरबारले विश्वास गरेको देखिन्छ । बस्न्यातलाई राजा गीर्वाणयुद्धविक्रम शाहले पनि तराईका सप्तरी, बारा, पर्सा, रौतहट र मोरङको कालाबन्जरमा बस्ती बसेपछि त्यहाँको ९ विविध सवालको व्यवस्था गरिदिएको लालमोहर पाइएको छ ।

अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात तराईतिर सरकारी काममा सक्रिय रहेको अवस्थामा वि.सं. १८५६ मा उनको निधन भएको थियो ।

तिलङ्गा घर

अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातले वि.सं. १८३२-३३ मा काठमाडौँको असन र बालकुमारीमा निवास बनाएका थिए । असन मूल सडकमा बनाइएको निवास (हवेली) कलात्मक थियो । उनको निवास यो भवनभन्दा भिन्न अलग भवन थियो । त्यसलाई मानमन्दिर भनिन्थ्यो । मानमन्दिर र यो तिलङ्गा घर फरक संरचना हुन् ।

तिलङ्गा घरको बाहिरी खण्ड अर्थात् पाहुना घरको अगाडिको भित्तामा ८० जना नेपाली सेना अर्थात् एक कम्पनीको ताँती सहितको मूर्ति स्थापित छन् । त्यसैले यस भवनलाई त्यसबेला बोलिचालीमा 'तिलङ्गा घर' वा 'पल्टन घर' भनिएको थियो । तिलङ्गा वा पल्टनको अर्थ सेना हो । त्यस तिलङ्गा घरमा हात्ती छिर्ने ढोका अथवा किसी ढोका छ । यसै ढोकाबाट उनी बस्ने चोक र निवास पुगिन्थ्यो ।

काजी अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातबाट सिक्न सकिने कुरा

अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातको जीवनचरित्रबाट आजका दिनमा राष्ट्रका सुरक्षा निकायहरू विशेषगरी नेपाली सेनाले के कस्तो पाठ सिक्न सक्ला भन्नेतर्फ संक्षिप्त विवेचना गरिनु सान्दर्भिक हुनसक्छ ।

अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातले नेपाल एकीकरण अभियानका विभिन्न चरणमा सक्रिय सेवा गरे। यो समयावधिमा उनले फरक राष्ट्रप्रमुख (राजा र नायब) र फरक पृष्ठभूमिका सैनिक कमाण्डरहरूसँग युद्धमा र शान्तिको समयमा विजित भूभागमा शान्ति सुरक्षा कायम राख्ने काममा सहकार्य गरेका थिए। अभिमानसिंहले सुरक्षाको जिम्मेवारी वहन गर्ने सिलसिलामा निर्वाह गरेको समयमा तत्कालीन नेपालको अवस्था मुख्यतः तीन कारणबाट अत्यन्त जटिल थियो।

पहिलो: अलग राज्यहरूमा विभाजित नेपालीहरू एउटा राज्य/राष्ट्रको भूगोलमा एकीकृत भएका त थिए तर आपसमा अविश्वास थियो। विजित भूभागमा बसोवास गर्ने जनतामाथि केन्द्रले के कस्तो सुरक्षात्मक रणनीति अख्तियार गर्ने भन्नेमा पृथ्वीनारायण शाहको देहावसानपछि राजदरबार अन्योलमा थियो।

दोस्रो: केन्द्र अथवा राजदरबारभित्र एकता थिएन; अनेकता थियो। राजदरबारभित्रै गुटहरू सक्रिय थिए। ती गुटले एक आपसमा विरोधी गुटलाई काट्ने, मृत्युदण्ड दिने जस्ता काम गर्न पछि पर्दैनथे।

तेस्रो: विजित भूभागमाथि कुनै पनि समय विद्रोह हुन सक्दथ्यो र उत्तरको छिमेकी तिब्बत, चीन तथा दक्षिणको इस्ट इन्डिया कम्पनीबाट कुनैपनि समय नेपालमाथि आक्रमण हुनसक्ने सम्भावना प्रबल थियो।

यस प्रकारका गम्भीर समस्या र चुनौतीहरूको चाडमा अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात नेपालको त्यसबेलाको उच्च पद काजी र सेनानायक पदमा थिए। शक्ति गुटहरूको चरमोत्कर्षमा अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात कहिल्यै कुनै विवादमा परेनन्। उनी कुनै गुटमा सहभागी भएनन्, तटस्थ रहे। सुरक्षा जिम्मेवारी निर्वाहमा उनी कहिल्यै चुकेनन्। आफ्नो जिम्मेवारी इलाकाभित्रका सूक्ष्म गतिविधिका सूचनामा यिनी राम्रो पहुँच राख्दथे। बस्न्यात धीरवान् थिए। अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातमा राम्रो सुभ्रबुध अपनाएर तल्लोतहका सैनिक (सुरक्षाकर्मी) हरूसँग निकट सम्पर्कमा रहेर उनीहरूको विश्वास जितेर काम गर्ने शैली थियो। यिनै गुणले उनलाई निर्विवादित बनाएको थियो, सफलता दिलाएको थियो।

सुरक्षा जिम्मेवारी जटिल र सवेदनशील विषय हो। सुरक्षा निकायको जिम्मेवार तहमा पदासिन पदाधिकारीले पर्याप्त सुभ्रबुध, धैर्य र सावधानी अवलम्बन गर्न सक्नुपर्छ। सूचनाहरूमा पहुँच राख्न सक्नुपर्दछ। पक्ष विपक्ष नबनेर तटस्थ रहेर आफूलाई प्राप्त जिम्मेवारीमा ध्यान दिनुपर्छ। सुरक्षा जिम्मेवारी राष्ट्रको गम्भीर र जटिल जिम्मेवारी हो भन्ने तथ्यलाई जुनसुकै बेला स्मरण गर्दै अनुशासित भएर प्रस्तुत हुन सक्नुपर्छ। राष्ट्रको हितलाई केन्द्रमा राखेर कार्य सम्पादन गर्नुपर्छ।

उच्चतहमा रहेर कार्य सम्पादन गर्ने राज्यका पदाधिकारीहरूले प्रदर्शन गरेको सुभ्रबुध, धैर्य र सावधानीले राष्ट्रको सुरक्षा र स्थायित्वमा उल्लेख्य प्रभाव पर्दछ। असल गुण भएका, सफल व्यक्तित्व र अनुशासित सैनिक प्रतिभाहरू भावी पुस्ताका सुरक्षाकर्मीहरूका आदर्श पात्र हुन्। सैनिक सङ्गठनका आदर्श पात्रहरूको जीवन चरित्रबाट आज र भोलिका सैनिकहरूले सिक्न सक्ने कुरा धेरै हुन्छन्। अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातबाट आजका सुरक्षा निकायमा कार्यरत सबै तह र तप्काका पदाधिकारीहरूले सिक्न सक्ने र सिक्नुपर्ने कुराहरू मुख्यतः यिनै हुन्।

अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात पछि बडाकाजी कहलाएका एकीकरणकालीन योद्धा अमरसिंह थापासहित धेरै सैनिकलाई लडाइँ अथवा युद्धशैली सिकाउने गुरु थिए।

अन्त्यमा

अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात आधुनिक नेपाल निर्माण अभियानका सुयोग्य सेनापति हुन् । उनको नेतृत्वमा युद्ध अनुभव सँगालेका अमरसिंह थापा पछि बडाकाजी कहलाए, नेपाल एकीकरणमा महत्त्वपूर्ण योगदान गर्न सफल भए । दक्षिण र उत्तरमा ठूला शक्तिशाली देशका सेना छँदाछँदै होसियारीपूर्वक, उच्च सुभ्रबुध अपनाएर सुनकोशीभन्दा पूर्वी पहाडको भूभाग नेपालमा विलय गरेर नेपालको सीमा सिक्किम र टिस्टासम्म पुऱ्याउनमा बस्न्यातको महत्त्वपूर्ण योगदान रहेको छ । बस्न्यातले भूभाग मात्र जितेनन्, विजित भूभागमा नेपाली शासन दिगोपना कायम राख्न र विशाल नेपालप्रति विजित भूभागका जनतामा आशा जगाउन पनि सफल भए । उनी नेपाली सेनालाई युद्धमा सफल हुने रणनीति वा नवीन युद्धकौशल प्रदान गर्ने सेनापति पनि हुन् । यसर्थ नेपालको एकीकरण अभियानमा र सैनिक इतिहासमा अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातको विशिष्ट स्थान छ भन्दा अत्युक्ति हुँदैन ।

सन्दर्भ सामग्री

१. पूर्णप्रकाश नेपाल यात्री, सेती अञ्चल दिग्दर्शन, विराटनगर: हिमाली सौगात प्रकाशन, २०३५, पृ. २२३-२५०
२. बाबुराम आचार्य (आचार्य पाद टिप्पणी नं. २१, पृ. १८५-८६) का अनुसार, शिवरामसिंह बस्न्यातको गोरखा राज्यको पद सरदार थियो भन्ने लिखित तथ्य भेटिएको छैन; तथापि त्यस समयको गोर्खा राज्यको नियमअनुसार उनको पद सरदार भएको हुनुपर्ने अनुमान गरी सरदार पद उल्लेख गरिएको हो । अर्का इतिहासकार दिनेशराज पन्तले शिवरामसिंह बस्न्यातले काजी पाएको उल्लेख गरेका छन् ।
३. शिवरामसिंह बस्न्यात नेतृत्वको सैनिक दलमाथि आक्रमण गर्ने कान्तिपुर राज्यका सैनिक दलको नेतृत्व गर्ने सेनानायकबारे फरकफरक तथ्य पाउन सकिन्छ । बाबुराम आचार्यले नेपालको संक्षिप्त वृत्तान्त, काठमाडौं : सम्पा./प्रकाशक : श्रीकृष्ण आचार्य, दोस्रो सं., २०६३, पृ. ११८ मा तौडिक प्रधान लेखेका छन् । बाबुराम आचार्य लिखित अर्को पुस्तक : श्री ५ बडामहाराजाधिराज पृथ्वीनारायण शाहको संक्षिप्त जीवनी, ललितपुर : साभा प्रकाशन, २०६१, पृ. १७१ मा सरदार शिवरामसिंह बस्न्यातले वीरगति पाएको कान्तिपुरे आक्रमणकारी सैनिक दलको नेतृत्व उमराव काशीराम थापाले गरेको उल्लेख छ । पछिल्ला चिठ्ठीपत्र, अन्य तथ्य र भाषा वंशावलीका आधारमा सो आक्रमणको नेतृत्व तौडिकले गरेको निष्कर्ष आचार्यको छ ।
४. मरवट । श्री ५ बडामहाराजाधिराज पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले राज्यविस्तार र सुरक्षाका लागि भएको लडाइँमा आफ्नातर्फका सैनिक मारिए (वीरगति पाए) भने तिनका सन्तानलाई पालनपोषणका लागि मरवट दिने स्थिति बसाएका थिए । मरवटबापत युद्धमा वीरगति पाएका सैनिकका सन्तानलाई राज्यले जमिन दिने गर्दथ्यो । सो जमीनबाट उब्जाउ हुने अन्नपातको आम्दानीबाट वीरगति पाउने सैनिकका सन्तान पालिन्थे । वीरगति पाउने सैनिकका यदि नाबालक छोरा छन् भने तिनलाई उमेर पुगेपछि सेनामा जागिर दिइन्थ्यो ।
५. बाबुराम आचार्य, पाद टिप्पणी नं. २५, पृ. १८८

६. बख्सी पद तत्कालीन दिल्लीका मुगल बादशाह बाबरको शासनकालपछि भारतको इस्लामिक सेनामा प्रचलनमा थियो । मुगलकालीन भारतमा सैनिक भर्तीका लागि बादशाहहरूले विशेष नीति तर्जुमा गरेका थिए । सैनिक भर्तीका लागि बादशाहसमक्ष अर्जी पेश गर्ने, बादशाहबाट हुकुम लिएर सैनिक भर्ती गर्ने, बढुवा, सरुवा आदि काम सम्हाल्ने बख्शी त्यसताका सैनिक सचिव सरहको पद हो । मुगल साम्राज्यमा बख्सीले विशाल सङ्ख्याका सैनिकहरूको वेतन, खान्गी, पदोन्नति, अनुशासन, सैनिकहरूका समग्र हेरचाहको काम गर्दथे । यसबाहेक, युद्धमा कुन योद्धालाई कुन मोर्चामा दायौं वा बायाँ कुन स्तरका हतियारसहित हात्ति, घोडा वा पैदल के कसरी युद्धमा परिचालन वा खटाउने भनी बादशाहलाई सल्लाह पेश गर्दथे । नेपाल भूमिमा भएका राज्यहरूमा बख्सी पद पाउने केहरसिंह बस्नेत प्रथम व्यक्ति हुन् । गोरखामा बख्शी पद काजीभन्दा तल र सरदारभन्दा माथिको थियो । पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले केहरसिंह बस्न्यातलाई बख्शीपदसँग गोर्खाली सेनाको सेनापति पद पनि दिएका थिए । बख्शीबारे थप जानकारीका लागि हेर्नुहोस : लेखकको पुस्तक सुबेदार : सैनिक सङ्गठनको गौरव, काठमाडौं : शारदादेवी खड्का, २०७४
७. दिनेशराज पन्त, गोर्खाली विजययात्रा, काठमाडौं: खिलशर्म-राजीवलोचनजोशीस्मारकप्रतिष्ठान, २०७०, पृ. १०
८. यस अध्यायमा वि.सं. १८२५/२६ अधिको सन्दर्भमा गोर्खाली र त्यसपछि नेपाली सेना उल्लेख गरिएको छ ।
९. आचार्य, नेपालको संक्षिप्त वृतान्त, पृ. १८९
१०. आचार्य, जीवनी, पृ. ४१९
११. अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यात र पारथ भण्डारीले हरिनन्द उपाध्यायलाई लेखेको पत्र योगी नरहरिनाथले इतिहास प्रकाशमा सन्धिपत्र सङ्ग्रह, भाग १, पृ.१२ मा प्रकाशन गरेका छन् । उक्त पत्रको व्यहोरा यसप्रकार छ :

श्री कुर्नेस श्री ५ महाराजज्यू

स्वस्तिश्री अभिमानसिंह श्री पारथ भंडारी कस्य पत्रम् आगे षर्पाका हरिनन्द पाध्या पोषन्यालके प्रणाम तिमिले चांडाडिका अम्बलै राजा ...का गादिका माटाको डल्लो र भारा फौज पठाई वक्सनु भया नौलाष किराँतका मुलुक मदेस पाहाड हात गरि ढोकामा छिराउला भन्या वेहोराको अर्जि चढाई पठाउंदा नुवाकोट ... का हजुरमा विंति पार्दा बहुत षुसु हुनु भै माटाका डल्लोलि छामी आइन् भनि ढुकुटीमा पाच्यो हामी भाराफौज षटाइ हुकुमलि आउदा दुदकोसी तर्न्या कामको चाजो गरी फौज ताहां हलेसिमा भोदौ महिनामा फौजलाई षर्च वाडदा श्रीसरदार रामकृष्ण कवरलेलि आयाका तम्रा पटना रुपैजा ३५५८ षर्च वाडी अम्बलै राजा को राज धानी आदी चौदंडी अम्बल भयो पछि दफा दफा आजसंम फौजलाई षर्च वाडदा हामीले लियाका तम्रा पटना रुपैजा ७४६६ अधिकार पछिका जमा रुपैजा ११०५१ के र नौलाष किराँतका डल्लो अर्जि चडाई भारा फौज भिकाई परवत्या दुनिया उमरा किराति देषि फोरी हाम्रा मतमा ल्याई चौदंडीको मुलक पाहाड मदेस अंवल गरायाको तम्रो चाकरिरिभियो सबै का हजुरमा विंति पारि हरिनन्द पाध्या तिमिलाई पाहाड माभीकिराँतमा मभुवा थुम १ ढालार मदेस जिल्लै प्रगंना षालिसाका सिर उत्तरको च्युन्या पाहाडका पनि

ढलासैं दक्षिण उत्तरका सिमा १ तिर्जुगा नदि से पश्चिम पूर्वको सिमाना १ तिर्जुगा नदिकोसीदोमान सैं सरोसर पश्चिम मौजे कनचनपुर र पुराना गडहीक तंहासे उत्तर दक्षिण सीमा १ कनचनपुर र पुराना गढी सैं सरासर उत्तर पौडा नदिका सिर चुन्या पाहाडका पश्चिमका सीमा १ ताहा सैं पूर्व यति ४ किल्ला भित्र को वहेरिनी अवाद समेत ससिम कुस गराई दिउला आफ्ना षातिर जामासँग वस पूर्व विजइपुर देवान बुद्धिकर्नले षायाको मुलुक मदेस पाहाड पनि हाम्रो अंवल गराउन्या उपाय तिमि गर्दै गर तम्रो सट्यार हामी गराउला षातिर जामा मान. इति संवत् १८३० साल फागुण सुदि १५ रोज. मु अंवरपुर सुभम ।-

१२. पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले बख्शी अभिमानसिंह बस्न्यातसहित पूर्व किराँत क्षेत्रमा रहेका आफ्ना सैनिक कमान्डरहरूलाई काठमाडौँबाट वि.सं. १८३१ असोज २३ वा ३० मा लेखेको पत्रको व्यहोरा :

श्रीदुर्गासहाय : १

‘स्वस्तिश्रीगिरिराजचक्रचूडामणिनरनारायणेत्यादिविविधविरुदावल
राजमानमानोन्नतश्रीमन्महाराजाधिराजश्रीश्रीश्रीमहाराजे
पृथ्वीनारायणसाहवहादुरसंसेरजंगदेवानाम्सदासमरविजयिनाम्

स्वस्तिश्री राज भारासमर्थ श्रीअभिमानसिंह.पारथभंडारी कीर्तिसिं षवास. वलिवानिजानाके. आशीष पूर्वक पत्रमिदं. जाहां कुसल ताहां कुसल चाहिये.आगे जाहाको समाचार भलोछ.उप्रान्त. पत्र आयो अर्थ मालुम भयो. चौदंड महा गढि तुल्याउनाको विस्तार औं.कुहिल्याबाट फौज हिड्याको. तिनै मुषले.गर्न्या काजको चांजो. लिम्बू श्रृंग्याका सुवा. सुवाले मान्न आयाको.सवै विस्तार विंति गरि पठायाछौ, विधि विस्तार.सुन्यौं इस् लिम्वा. चांथापुसम्म. जति हाम्रो फौज पुगयो त. अव. त्यो जग्गा छोडनु छैन. वलिया गरि. गढि ताहि बनाउना छनु, वनाव.वांकी.इस् विलम्वा.चांथापु. सम्म हाम्रो अम्बल भयापछि.कनका पूर्व., तिष्टा पश्चिम पनि अम्बल गरि हालन्याहो. घटिया देस् आफूले षाई कन.आमद हुन्या वढिया देश छोडनाको प्रयोजन केही होइन.अम्बल गर्न्यै हो. तर. इस्लिम्वा. चांथापु सांध गरि कन पनि. सुषिमले.हामी सँग. घायै गर्न पस्यो. कट्क गर्ना महा पसेन् त, कनका हेरि वुष्फि तर्नु.इस्लिम्वा. चांथापु.लिदा सुषिम चीक गयो.घा तोडि हाल्यो त. आषिर. तेत्ति महा.पनि. चटकि गयो त.मधेश छोडन्या होइन.हिंदुपतिको सांध.तिष्टा सम्म चाडै गरि हालन्या हो. यो काज.बुभ्नु चांहि, पन्याकोछ. उप्रान्त.वुद्धि कर्णका हातिराम्रो छ गरे.त्यो हाति.माहुत लाई लायेर.वहांको माहुत कमाई मन.सय ४।५ रुपैया कवोलि कन सो.हाति चोरि ल्याउन पठाउन्याहो. माहुतले चोरि ल्याउ भन्यात. केही वेछैन.ति. माहुतका.कुल कविला त.हाम्रै देश महा हुनन् केही कवोलि षतिर्जामा दि कल मरी जान्या थियो. पायियेन.केही जुक्तिले कोहि सिपाहि कमायेर हजार वाह सय.कवोलि.सर्सिरोपाउ कवोलि.हुन्या भया.तेसलाई मराउन्या हो.तेसो भया पछि. कल सबै मरि जान्छ. त्यो काम षामषा गराउ.उप्रान्त.अम्बर पुरका तरियानिका रुपैया विजैपुरका तरियानिका. रुपैयाले ताहां सिपाहीहरूको षर्च र.ताहां लगात. षर्ख.उठाउना गर. वांकि हजार २००१ रुपैया चहाई पठायाछौ आईपुग्या.कवच गरि पठायाको छ. पुगला वांकि.इसैलिम्वा.चांथापु दषि.पुँढो अम्बल गर्न जानु छैन.सुषिम आई लाग्या एकाठाउं.बनाइकन. कत्तल गर्न्या चांजो गर. सुषिमका. पुराना देश महा गया. माथि लासा.सँग विग्रन जाला.तस् अर्थ. उपल्ला

मुष तिर.लासाका देश महा चार. अंगुल पनि.सांध चापनु छैन. प्रजालाई दुष दिनु पनि छैन. सुषिमका. पुराना देश महापनि.जानु छैन. विज्ञेषु. आश्विन वदि ३० रोज ४ मुकाम काठमाडौं शुभम् श्रीबालकृष्ण जैसी.विरभद्र उपाध्या के प्रणाम् ।

१३. त्रिरत्न मानन्धर र अरू, नेपाल एकीकरणको इतिहास, काठमाडौं: जङ्गी अड्डा, २०७७, पृ. १२०।

१४. ऐ., पृ. १२४-२५

१५. तुलसीराम वैद्य र अरू, नेपालको सैनिक इतिहास, काठमाडौं: शाही नेपाली जङ्गी अड्डा, २०४९, पृ. ४६२-४६३ ।

भ्रष्टाचारले राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षामा पारेको प्रभाव: एक विश्लेषण



✍ तीर्थराज चापागाईं

लेखसार

यो आलेखले भ्रष्टाचार र राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाबीचको गहिरो अन्तरसम्बन्धको विश्लेषण गर्दछ। नेपालको सन्दर्भमा सुशासन, जवाफदेहिता र पारदर्शिताको ह्रासले राज्य संरचना मात्र होइन; राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको मेरुदण्ड नै कमजोर पारेको देखिन्छ। विभिन्न अध्ययन, तथ्याङ्कीय विश्लेषण, ऐतिहासिक उदाहरणहरू (जस्तै ललिता निवास प्रकरण, नवयुवा आन्दोलन र समसामयिक नीतिगत भ्रष्टाचार) र संस्थागत अवस्थाको समीक्षा गरिएको छ। यस आलेखले भ्रष्टाचार केवल आर्थिक वा प्रशासनिक समस्या नभई राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको मूल चुनौतीको रूपमा रहेको चित्रण गर्दछ। भ्रष्टाचारले नागरिकको विश्वास घटाउँछ, नीतिगत निर्णयहरूमा विचलन ल्याउँछ र शासन संरचनामा अस्थिरता निम्त्याउँछ। अन्ततः यस लेखले नीतिगत सुधारका उपायहरूका रूपमा पारदर्शी शासन, स्वायत्त निगरानी संयन्त्र, नैतिक नेतृत्व र नागरिक सचेतना अभिवृद्धिलाई केन्द्रमा राख्नुपर्ने सुझाव प्रदान गर्दछ।

शब्दकुञ्जी

भ्रष्टाचार, राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा, सुशासन, पारदर्शिता, जवाफदेहिता, रणनीतिक जोखिम, सार्वजनिक स्रोतको दुरुपयोग, जनविश्वास सङ्कट, सामाजिक अस्थिरता, आर्थिक असमानता, नीति कार्यान्वयन, राष्ट्रिय हित

राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको पुनःपरिभाषा: सैन्य सुरक्षाभन्दा फराकिलो आयाम

राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा केवल सीमा सुरक्षा वा सैन्य बलको परिचालनमा मात्र सीमित छैन। यसले राज्य, नागरिक, राजनीतिक प्रणाली, आर्थिक स्थायित्व, सामाजिक सद्भाव र संस्थागत विश्वसनीयताको संरक्षणसँग सम्बन्धित व्यापक आयाम समेट्छ। राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा बहुआयामिक विषय भएकाले मुलुकको सार्वभौमिकता, अखण्डता, स्वाधीनता, एकता तथा भौतिक, सामाजिक, आर्थिक, सांस्कृतिक र मानवीय पक्षको संरक्षणमा केन्द्रित हुन्छ। आन्तरिक र बाह्य परिस्थितिअनुसार सुरक्षा नीति, परराष्ट्र नीति, प्रतिरक्षा नीति, आन्तरिक सुरक्षा र सार्वजनिक सुरक्षाका उपायहरू समयसापेक्ष कार्यान्वयन गर्नु आवश्यक हुन्छ। यसको अन्तिम लक्ष्य राष्ट्रको अस्तित्व, स्थायित्व र जनजीवनको सर्वाङ्गीण सुरक्षाको प्रत्याभूति सुनिश्चित गर्दै मानवीय मूल्यको बढोत्तरी गर्नु हो।

✍ लेखक नेपाल सरकारका शाखा अधिकृत हुनुहुन्छ।

आजको बदलिँदो विश्व परिवेशमा राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाका आयामहरू सैन्य, सामरिक र सीमा सुरक्षाभन्दा थप व्यापक र फराकिलो हुँदै गएका छन्। आर्थिक सुरक्षा, राजनीतिक स्थायित्व, मानवीय सुरक्षा, सामाजिक सुरक्षा, सूचना सुरक्षा, साइबर सुरक्षा, सामाजिक न्याय, सुशासन र पारदर्शिता पनि यसका मूल आयाम हुन्। यसले आधुनिक राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा केवल भौतिक शत्रुबाट मात्र होइन; आन्तरिक कमजोरी, प्रशासनिक अक्षमता र सामाजिक असन्तुलनबाट समेत प्रभावित हुन्छ।

नेपालमा राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको विद्यमान अवस्था र सतहमा देखिएका चुनौतीहरू

नेपालको राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा अहिले बाह्य आक्रमण वा प्रत्यक्ष सैन्य खतराभन्दा पनि आन्तरिक कमजोरीहरूबाट बढी प्रभावित छ। देशमा राजनीतिक अस्थिरता, कमजोर सुशासन, सार्वजनिक स्रोतहरूको दुरुपयोग र प्रशासनिक प्रक्रियाको ढिलाइले सुरक्षा संरचना कमजोर बनाएको छ। कमजोर सुशासन र बढ्दो भ्रष्टाचारको कारणले राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षामा थप जटिल चुनौतीहरू स्पष्टरूपमा देखिन थालेका छन् जसमा राजनीतिक र प्रशासनिक अस्थिरता प्रमुख देखिन्छ। हरेक दशकमा दोहोरिने गरेको शासन प्रणालीको परिवर्तन, अस्थिर सरकार, राजनीतिक दलभिन्न भइरहने टुटफुट र शासकीय नेतृत्वप्रतिको बढ्दो अविश्वासले राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा नीतिको प्रभावकारितामा ह्रास आएको छ। बढ्दो भ्रष्टाचार र कमजोर सुशासनको कारणले सार्वजनिक सेवा प्रवाह, विकास निर्माणमा गुणस्तर र पारदर्शिता कमजोर हुँदा जनताको राज्यप्रतिको भरोसा घट्छ, जनअसन्तुष्टि बढाउँछ र सामाजिक अस्थिरता सिर्जना गर्छ।

संस्थागत सुदृढीकरणको अभाव, सार्वजनिक स्रोतको दुरुपयोग र पूर्वाधारको कमजोर उपयोगको कारण राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाका संयन्त्रहरूको परिचालन, सीमा व्यवस्थापन, साइबर सुरक्षा तथा आपतकालीन व्यवस्थापनका लागि पर्याप्त पूर्वतयारी हुन नसक्दा सुरक्षा सङ्कटको संवेदनशील अवस्थामा समेत राज्यका तर्फबाट छिटो र प्रभावकारी प्रतिक्रिया गर्न कठिन हुन्छ। शासन-प्रशासन सञ्चालन, प्रक्रियागत व्यवस्थापन, जनविश्वास आर्जन र सार्वजनिक स्रोतको प्रयोगमा हुने गरेको कमजोरीले भने मुलुकको आन्तरिक अस्थिरता, सामाजिक विखण्डन, सीमा नियन्त्रणको चुनौती र बाह्य प्रभावका लागि जोखिम बढाउँदै लगेको देखिन्छ। आन्तरिक कमजोरीहरू सुधारिएनन् भने सतहमा देखिएका चुनौतीहरू समयसँगै राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको गहिरो सङ्कटमा परिणत हुन सक्छन्।

राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाका आयामहरू र नेपालको सन्दर्भ

राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा केवल सैन्य र भौगोलिक सीमा सुरक्षामा मात्र सङ्कुचित नभई बहुआयामिक पक्ष समेटेने भएकोले यसका सबै आयामहरूको सन्तुलित व्यवस्थापनले मात्र राष्ट्र, राष्ट्रियता र जनताको समष्टिगत सुरक्षालाई मजबुत बनाउँछ। सामरिक सुरक्षा बाह्य हमलाबाट जोगाउन आवश्यक हुन्छ भने आर्थिक सुरक्षा देशको स्थिरता, सर्वाङ्गीण विकास र स्वाधीनता अक्षुण्ण राख्नको निमित्त महत्त्वपूर्ण मानिन्छ। साथै, सामाजिक सुरक्षा नागरिकको राज्यप्रतिको विश्वास, भरोसा र राष्ट्रिय एकताको भावना कायम राखिराख्न अहम् हुन्छ र वातावरणीय सुरक्षाले दीर्घकालीन प्राकृतिक जोखिमलाई न्यूनीकरण गर्न मद्दत गर्छ।

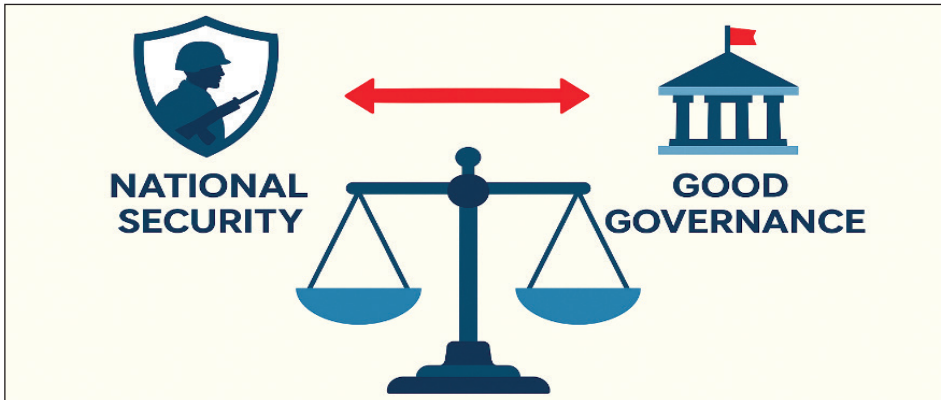
नेपालको सन्दर्भमा राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाका आयामहरूसँगै सुशासन (Good Governance) लाई प्रमुख आयामका रूपमा ग्रहण गर्नुपर्ने देखिन्छ। सुशासनले शासन प्रक्रियामा पारदर्शिता, जवाफदेहिता, भ्रष्टाचार नियन्त्रण

र विधिको शासनलाई सुनिश्चित गर्छ । जब सरकार प्रभावकारी हुन्छ, राज्य संयन्त्रहरू सक्षम र पारदर्शी हुन्छन्, तब सुरक्षा नीतिको कार्यान्वयनमा सक्षमता देखिन्छ । राज्यका संयन्त्रप्रति जनताको भरोसा बढ्छ र आन्तरिक अस्थिरता घट्छ । सुशासनको अभाव, राजनीतिक हस्तक्षेप र सार्वजनिक व्यवस्थापनमा भ्रष्टाचारको सघनताले प्रशासनिक प्रक्रिया कमजोर मात्र बनाउँदैन, यसले सामाजिक विशृङ्खलता र आर्थिक असुरक्षा बढाएर राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षामा प्रत्यक्ष खतरा निम्त्याउँछ ।

मुलुकको भौतिक सुरक्षा अपेक्षाकृतरूपमा स्थिर देखिएता पनि सुशासन, राजनीतिक स्थायित्व, आर्थिक सुरक्षा र सामाजिक एकताको कमजोरीले वर्तमान समयमा राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा प्रणालीको आधार कमजोर बनाउँदै लगेको छ । सीमा सुरक्षा, साइबर सुरक्षा र आपत्कालीन व्यवस्थापनका लागि आवश्यक संयन्त्र, पूर्वाधार र जनशक्ति प्रभावकारी बनाउनको लागि समेत सुशासन अपरिहार्य छ । त्यसैले नेपालमा राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षालाई बहुआयामिक दृष्टिकोणबाट मूल्याङ्कन गर्दा सुशासनलाई अन्य आयामहरूसँग आबद्ध गरिनु आवश्यक छ ।

सुशासन-राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको प्रमुख आयाम

सुशासनका प्रमुख पक्षहरूमा भ्रष्टाचारको अन्त्य, पारदर्शिता, जवाफदेहिता, सार्वजनिक सहभागिता, विधिको शासन (rule of law) र प्रभावकारी प्रशासनिक संयन्त्र पर्दछन् । जब यी पक्षहरूले सन्तुलित रूपमा काम गर्दछन् तब सरकारले निष्पक्ष निर्णय गर्न सक्षम हुन्छ र सार्वजनिक स्रोतको सुव्यवस्थित उपयोग हुन्छ तथा नागरिकमा राज्यप्रतिको भरोसा बढ्छ । सुशासन कमजोर भयो भने राज्यको तर्फबाट भएका निर्णयहरूमा मनोमानी र सार्वजनिक स्रोतको दुरुपयोग हुन्छ । यसले सामाजिक असन्तुष्टि निम्त्याइ सर्वोच्च कार्यकारी निकायदेखि स्थानीय तहसम्मको शासकीय स्वरूपलाई खल्बल्याउँछ ।



सुशासन आधुनिक राज्य व्यवस्था सुसञ्चालन र स्थायित्वको मेरुदण्ड हो । सुशासनले नागरिकमा विश्वास, राज्यका नीति र संयन्त्रमा पारदर्शिता तथा नेतृत्वमा उत्तरदायित्व सिर्जना गर्छ । जब शासन प्रणाली पारदर्शी, जवाफदेही र भ्रष्टाचारमुक्त हुन्छ तब मात्र राज्यको संयन्त्र सुदृढ रहन्छ र राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा बलियो हुन्छ । अर्कोतर्फ कमजोर शासन व्यवस्थाले नागरिक असन्तोष, वैदेशिक हस्तक्षेप र आन्तरिक आन्दोलनका सम्भावनालाई समेत बढाउँछ; जुन अन्ततः राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षामाथिको प्रत्यक्ष खतरा हो ।

सुशासनका सूचक र नेपालको अवस्था

नेपालको सन्दर्भमा सुशासनको हास, प्रशासनिक अकर्मण्यता र राजनीतिक स्वार्थले राज्य संयन्त्रको संस्थागत सक्षमता कमजोर बनाउँदै लगेको देखिन्छ। अख्तियार दुरुपयोग अनुसन्धान आयोगको आर्थिक वर्ष २०८०/८१ को प्रतिवेदनअनुसार उक्त आ.व. मा २६,९१८ उजुरी दर्ता भएका, २०१ वटा भ्रष्टाचारसम्बन्धी मुद्दा अदालतमा दायर भएका र १,५४५ व्यक्तिहरू अभियुक्त बनेका छन्। त्यस्तै अख्तियार दुरुपयोग अनुसन्धान आयोगको आर्थिक वर्ष २०८१/८२ को प्रतिवेदन अनुसार उक्त आ.व. मा कुल २६,९१८ वटा उजुरी दर्ता भएकोमा लगभग ३८.९१ % उजुरी स्थानीय तहसँग सम्बन्धित रहेकोले सुशासनको समस्या केवल सङ्घीय तहमा मात्र नभई स्थानीय तहमा पनि रहेको देखिन्छ। ट्रान्सपरेन्सी इन्टरनेसनलले प्रकाशन गर्ने वार्षिक प्रतिवेदन- २०२४ अनुसार भ्रष्टाचार अवधारणा सूचक (CPI) मा १८० देशमध्ये नेपालले १०० पूर्णाङ्कमा ३५ अङ्क ल्याई १०७ औं स्थानमा रहेको देखिन्छ।

सुशासनका पक्षहरूमध्ये नेपालमा कमजोर अवस्थामा देखिएका अन्य प्रमुख पक्षहरूमा जवाफदेहिता (Accountability) को कमी हुनु र विधिको शासन (Rule of Law) को पूर्ण परिपालना नहुनुलाई समेत लिन सकिन्छ। उच्च तहका नेतृत्वमा जोडिएको भ्रष्टाचारजन्य मुद्दाको प्रभावकारी अनुसन्धान नहुने, न्यायिक निरूपण र फैसला कार्यान्वयनमा अस्वाभाविक विलम्ब हुने गरेको देखिन्छ। सार्वजनिक स्रोतको प्रयोगमा अनियमितता, सार्वजनिक ठेक्का प्रक्रियामा पारदर्शिताको अभाव लगायतका विषयमा निरन्तर प्रश्नहरू उठ्ने गरेको छ। सुशासनको लागि भ्रष्टाचारको निगरानी गर्ने निकायहरूको सुदृढ संस्थागत क्षमता, स्पष्ट क्षेत्राधिकार, सबल निगरानी प्रणाली तथा विश्वसनीय कार्यशैली आवश्यक पर्दछ। राज्यका निकायहरूमा जवाफदेहिताको अभाव हुँदा पारदर्शिता पनि कमजोर हुन्छ र विधिको शासनको प्रभाव घट्छ तथा समाष्टिगत सुशासन सुदृढ हुन सक्दैन। यी चुनौतीहरूलाई समयमै उचित सम्बोधन नगरे राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा, सामाजिक स्थिरता र विकास सबै प्रभावित हुन्छन्।

नेपालमा भ्रष्टाचारको प्रवृत्ति

नेपालमा भ्रष्टाचारको प्रवृत्तिमा निरन्तर वृद्धि भइरहेको छ र यसको स्वरूपमा समेत परिवर्तन भएको छ। एक अध्ययनले देखाएको छ कि नीतिगत भ्रष्टाचार (policy corruption); जसमा बजेट, कानून, नीति निर्णयहरू विशिष्ट समूहका फाइदाका लागि मोडिन्छन्, समकालीन नेपाली समाजमा व्यापक रूपमा फैलिएको छ। यसले सङ्केत गर्छ कि भ्रष्टाचार अब केवल सामान्य घुस वा ठेक्कापट्टाको मामिलामा मात्र सीमित छैन, यसले नीति निर्माणतहसम्म छेडखानी गर्न पुगिसकेको छ। त्यस्तै, दण्डप्रक्रिया एकदमै कमजोर देखिन्छ। भ्रष्टाचारजन्य गतिविधिमा उच्च तहका केही राजनैतिक र प्रशासनिक व्यक्तिहरू संलग्न भए पनि अनुसन्धान नै कमजोर हुने, अभियोजन समयमा नगरिने, न्यायिक प्रक्रियामा गएपछि पनि सजाय कम र निर्णय विवादित वा समयमै नहुने अवस्थाका बारेमा समेत प्रशस्त प्रश्नहरू उठ्ने गरेका छन्।

राजनीतिक नेतृत्व, सार्वजनिक पदाधिकारीहरू लगायतबाट आर्थिक अनियमितता हुन्छ भन्ने जनभावना सामाजिक सञ्जालमा, आन्दोलनमा र सम्बन्धित निकायहरूकै प्रतिवेदनबाट समेत देखिन्छ। तर राज्य पक्षबाट

त्यस्ता आमगुनासा र असन्तुष्टिहरूको निष्पक्ष रूपमा सम्बोधन भएको पाइँदैन । साथै, संवैधानिक/राजनीतिक नियुक्तिहरू विवादमुक्त नहुने अवस्था पुनरावृत्ति भइरहेको छ । यसले बदनामी मात्र होइन; संस्थागत निष्पक्षता र सक्षमतामा प्रश्न उठाउँछ ।

भ्रष्टाचारको ट्रेन्ड (नेपाल)

आर्थिक वर्ष	उजुरी सङ्ख्या	दायर मुद्दा सङ्ख्या	अभियुक्त सङ्ख्या
२०१९/२० (२०७६/७७)	-	४४१	१,२१२
२०२२/२३ (२०७९/८०)	२०,९०५	१६२	७६६
२०२३/२४ (२०८०/८१)	२६,९१८	२०१	१,५४५
२०२४/२५ (२०८१/८२)	३७,०२६	१३७	७५३

तथ्याङ्क स्रोत: अख्तियार दुरुपयोग अनुसन्धान आयोग, वार्षिक प्रतिवेदन २०७९/८०, २०८०/८१, प्रेस विज्ञापित २०८१ असोज १२

माथिको तालिकाबाट भ्रष्टाचारजन्य उजुरीको सङ्ख्या वर्षेनी वृद्धि हुँदै गएको देखिन्छ । आ.व. २०२२/२३ को २०,९०५ बाट २०२३/२४ मा २६,९१८ मा पुगेको, अनि २०२४/२५ मा ३७,०२६ पुगेको छ । अदालतमा दायर मुद्दा तथा अभियुक्तको सङ्ख्या पनि क्रमशः वृद्धि भएको छ । २०२२/२३ मा १६२ मुद्दामा ७६६ अभियुक्त विरुद्ध भ्रष्टाचारको मुद्दा दायर भएका थिए भने २०२३/२४ मा २०१ मुद्दामा १,५४५ अभियुक्त थिए ।

नेपालमा भ्रष्टाचार विरुद्ध कानूनी र संस्थागत संरचनाहरू त विद्यमान छन्; तर ती मात्र पर्याप्त होइनन् । समस्या केवल नियम छ भन्नेमा होइन नियम लागु हुन्छन् कि छैनन्, निष्पक्षता कायम हुन्छ कि हुँदैन, गरिब र प्रभावशालीबीच कानूनको नजर फरक छ-छैन भन्नेजस्ता सवालहरू उठिरहेका छन् । नीतिगत भ्रष्टाचार, राजनीतिक संरक्षण, न्यायप्रक्रियाको ढिलाइ, सामाजिक स्वीकृति र संस्थागत कमजोरीले भ्रष्टाचारलाई केवल बढाउने मात्र होइन, नयाँ रूपमा संस्थागत बनाइदिएका छन् । यदि यसलाई समयमै सम्बोधन नगरिए सुशासन, पारदर्शिता र जवाफदेहिताको अभावले राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाका लागि दीर्घकालीन जोखिम बन्न सक्ने स्थिति छ ।

भ्रष्टाचार: राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षामा अदृश्य शत्रु

राष्ट्रको सुरक्षा केवल आधुनिक हतियार र सुरक्षा संयन्त्रमा मात्र निर्भर हुँदैन । राज्य संयन्त्रको इमान्दारी, नीति निर्माणमा पारदर्शिता, कूटनीतिक सन्तुलन र जनविश्वास नै राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा प्रणालीको प्रमुख आधारहरू हुन् । नेपालको सन्दर्भमा बढ्दो भ्रष्टाचार राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाका लागि अदृश्य तर गम्भीर खतरा बन्दै गएको छ । यसले सरकारी निकाय, सुरक्षा संयन्त्र र नीति कार्यान्वयनमा कमजोरी ल्याउँछ । नीतिगत भ्रष्टाचारले सार्वजनिक स्रोतको दुरुपयोग गर्नुका साथै, रणनीतिक निर्णय र सुरक्षा योजनामा प्रत्यक्ष बाधा सिर्जना गर्छ । जब सुरक्षा बजेट र पूर्वाधार आवश्यकतानुसार प्रयोग हुन सक्दैनन्; तब सुरक्षा संयन्त्रको क्षमता र मनोबल घट्छ र राष्ट्रिय हितका संवेदनशील क्षेत्रहरू कमजोर बन्छन् । परिणामस्वरूप भ्रष्टाचारले सुरक्षाको मेरुदण्डमा समेत क्षय गरिरहेको हुन्छ ।

त्यसैगरी, भ्रष्टाचारले राज्यप्रतिको विश्वासको सङ्कट र सामाजिक अस्थिरता निम्त्याउँछ। जब नागरिकले प्रहरी, सेना र न्याय प्रणालीको निष्पक्षता र पारदर्शितामा विश्वास गुमाउँछन्, उनीहरूको विधिको शासन र सुरक्षा प्रणालीप्रतिको आस्था कमजोर हुन्छ। सार्वजनिक खरिदमा हुने अनियमितता र घुसखोरीले विकास योजनामा विलम्ब गर्छ र लागत बढाउँछ, जसले आपत्कालीन अवस्थामा सुरक्षा संयन्त्रलाई प्रभावकारी रूपमा काम गर्न नसक्ने बनाउँछ। आर्थिक असमानता र अवसरहीनता बढ्दा नागरिक असन्तोष र आन्दोलनको सम्भावना पनि बढ्छ। साथै, भ्रष्टाचारले देशको अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय छवि कमजोर पारेर वैदेशिक लगानी र सहयोग घटाउँछ, जसको सिधा असर राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको स्रोत, साधन र स्थायित्वमा पर्छ। त्यसैले भ्रष्टाचारलाई नियन्त्रण नगरेसम्म नेपालको सुरक्षा सुदृढ र दिगो बन्न सक्दैन।

उदाहरणका लागि जेन-जी आन्दोलनको सन्दर्भमा राज्य प्रणालीमा व्याप्त भ्रष्टाचार र सुशासनको अभावले सुरक्षा सङ्कटको अवस्था आउनु अघि राज्यका निकायहरूले समयमै सही सूचना प्राप्त नगर्ने र सही समयमा उचित प्रतिक्रिया दिन नसक्ने अवस्था सिर्जना गर्‍यो। भ्रष्टाचार नियन्त्रण नहुने र सुशासनको अवस्थामा सुधार नहुने हो भने, राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको अवस्था कमजोर हुने मात्र हुँदैन, मुलुकको आन्तरिक सुव्यवस्था र बाह्य खतरा दुबै पक्षमा उच्च जोखिम रहन्छ। अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय स्तरमा पनि मुलुकको प्रतिष्ठामा आँच आउने हुन्छ। यसैले भ्रष्टाचारको नियन्त्रण गर्नु र सुशासनको प्रवर्द्धन गर्नु राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा र सम्मानको सुदृढीकरणको लागि अपरिहार्य छ।

नवयुवा आन्दोलन र राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षामा प्रभाव

२०८२ भदौ २३-२४ मा घटेको नवयुवाको अगुवाइमा भएको आन्दोलन सामाजिक सञ्जाल नियमन, सुशासनको अभाव, भ्रष्टाचारको बढोत्तरी, नातावादलगायत विरुद्धको आक्रोश थियो। जुन नेपालका हालसम्मका सबैभन्दा गम्भीर आन्तरिक राजनीतिक र सुरक्षा सङ्कटमध्ये एक बन्न पुग्यो। २०८२ भदौ २३-२४ का दिन नेपालमा भएको आन्दोलनको लागि नवयुवा पुस्ताले आह्वान गरेका थिए। यस आन्दोलनको मूल कारक तत्त्व सुशासनको अभाव, राजनीतिक अस्थिरता, प्रशासनिक जवाफदेहिताको अभाव र सामाजिक-आर्थिक असमानता हुन् भनिएको थियो।

असन्तुष्टि चुलिइरहेको अवस्थामा तत्कालीन सरकारद्वारा सामाजिक सञ्जालमा नयाँ प्रतिबन्धहरू लागू गरिनु यस आन्दोलनको तात्कालिक र प्रत्यक्ष उत्प्रेरक कारण बन्यो। नवयुवा वर्गले राजनीतिक, प्रशासनिक र आर्थिक असमानताको विरुद्ध सडकमा आउँदा उनीहरूको माग सुन्ने र समस्या समाधान गर्ने सरकारी संयन्त्र प्रभावकारी भएनन्। यसले तत्काल आन्दोलनलाई तीव्र बनायो र आन्दोलन सुरुमा काठमाडौँ केन्द्रित भई पछि देशैभरिका प्रमुख शहरहरूमा आगोको लप्कासरह फैलिएको थियो।

यस घटनामा सुरक्षा संयन्त्रको सूचना सङ्कलन, आन्दोलनलाई अनियन्त्रित हुन नदिन हुनुपर्ने रणनीतिक परिचालन र बल प्रयोगबीचको असन्तुलनले मानवीय र भौतिक क्षति दुवै बढायो।

आन्दोलनको क्रममा कुल ७७ जनाको मृत्युभएको थियो। जसमध्ये ७३ जना पुरुष र ४ जना महिला रहेका थिए। मृत्युवण गरेका मध्ये १३ देखि २८ वर्ष उमेर समूहमा ३९ जना रहेका थिए। घाइतेको कुल सङ्ख्या

२,४२९ रहेको थियो, जसमध्ये १,४३३ जना १३-२८ वर्ष समूहका रहेको देखिन्छ । कुल भौतिक क्षतिको मूल्य करिब रू. ८४ अर्ब ४५ करोड ७७ लाख रहेको अनुमान गरिएको छ, जुन देशको कुल गार्हस्थ्य उत्पादनको १.३८ प्रतिशत र चालु आर्थिक वर्षको बजेटको ४.३० प्रतिशत हो । कुल क्षति रकममध्ये सरकारी/सार्वजनिक क्षेत्रमा ५३ प्रतिशत, निजी क्षेत्रमा ४० प्रतिशत र सामुदायिक तथा अन्य क्षेत्रमा ७ प्रतिशत अंश रहेको छ । बागमती प्रदेश सबैभन्दा धेरै प्रभावित भएको छ । आन्दोलनको क्रममा कुल २,६७१ भवन क्षतिग्रस्त भएका छन्, जसमध्ये ७९.८ प्रतिशत सार्वजनिक भवन रहेका छन् । भवनमा रू. ३९ अर्ब ३१ करोड ७५ लाख, सवारी साधनमा रू. १२ अर्ब ९३ करोड ६१ लाख, अन्य भौतिक सम्पत्तिमा रू. २० अर्ब ३६ करोड ४० लाख, नगद तथा बहुमूल्य वस्तुमा रू. २ अर्ब ८१ करोड ३४ लाख र बाँकी रकम रु ९ अर्ब २ करोड ६७ लाख अन्य अस्थायी सम्पत्ति तथा निजी सम्पत्तिमा क्षति भएको विवरण प्राप्त भएको छ (२०८२ भदौ २३ र २४ गतेको आन्दोलनका क्रममा भएको सार्वजनिक सम्पत्ति, भौतिक संरचना तथा निजी प्रतिष्ठानको क्षतिको मूल्याङ्कन र सार्वजनिक संरचनाको पुनर्निर्माण योजना सम्बन्धी प्रतिवेदन, २०८२) ।

यो आन्दोलनको सतहमा देखिएका तत्कालीन कारणहरूमा शासन प्रशासनमा मौलाएको चरम भ्रष्टाचार, सार्वजनिक ठेक्कामा विचौलियातन्त्रको कब्जा र सार्वजनिक नियुक्तिमा राजनीतिक हस्तक्षेप र नागरिक असन्तोषको विस्फोट थियो । पृष्ठभूमिमा भ्रष्टाचार नियन्त्रणको संवैधानिक जिम्मेवारी पाएको अख्तियार दुरुपयोग अनुसन्धान आयोग माथि बारम्बार उठ्ने गरेको प्रश्न, अपराध अनुसन्धान र सुरक्षाको जिम्मेवारी रहेको प्रहरीप्रतिको निष्पक्षताको प्रश्न र न्यायालयसम्म फैलिएको नीतिगत भ्रष्टाचारको आरोप, सार्वजनिक स्रोतको दोहन र ठेक्कापट्टामा अनियमितता, राज्य संयन्त्रप्रति युवापुस्ताको असन्तुष्टि र बढ्दो बेरोजगारी, दलगत स्वार्थ र अक्षम नेतृत्व, वैदेशिक शक्तिहरूबीचको प्रभाव तथा तीव्र प्रतिस्पर्धा, भूराजनीतिक दबाब; बाह्य मुलुकहरूको आन्तरिक राजनीतिमा बढेको चासो तथा वैदेशिक सञ्चारमाध्यम र डिजिटल प्लेटफर्ममार्फत फैलिएको असन्तोषको तीव्र प्रचार, मिसइन्फर्मेसन र डिजिटलमार्फत लगायतका पक्षहरूले प्रदर्शनकारीहरूलाई थप उत्तेजित र अनियन्त्रित बनाएका थिए ।

यो आन्दोलनले नेपालका लागि राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षामा बहुआयामिक सङ्कट सिर्जना गर्‍यो । तत्कालीन रूपमा सुरक्षा निकाय र प्रशासनले समयमै प्रतिक्रिया दिन नसक्दा देशभित्र असुरक्षा र अस्थिरताको अवस्था उत्पन्न भयो । यसले आन्तरिक सामाजिक सद्भाव र एकता खल्बल्यायो र युवावर्गको आन्दोलनप्रति अपार समर्थन बढायो । यसबाट दीर्घकालमा समेत अन्तर्राष्ट्रियस्तरमा नेपालले विश्वासको वातावरण कायम राख्न चुनौती सिर्जना भई विदेशी लगानी तथा वैश्विक साभेदारीमा समेत असर पर्ने देखिन्छ । यस घटनाले स्पष्ट देखायो कि राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा केवल सैन्य वा कानूनको कार्यान्वयनमा मात्र निर्भर नभई राज्यको सुशासन, शासकीय पारदर्शिता, जवाफदेही प्रशासन र सामाजिक विश्वासबाट प्रत्यक्ष प्रभावित हुनसक्छ । भ्रष्टाचार र जवाफदेहिताको कमीले सामाजिक असन्तुष्टि मात्र नबढाई राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षामा समेत खतरा सिर्जना गर्न सक्छ भन्ने कुरालाई जेन-जी आन्दोलनले प्रमाणित गर्‍यो ।

सुशासन र विधिको शासनको ह्रासले राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षामा निम्त्याउने सङ्कट

राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको महत्त्वपूर्ण आयामको रूपमा रहने सुशासनले शासन प्रणाली, कानूनी प्रक्रिया, प्रशासनिक जवाफदेहिता र नीति कार्यान्वयनको स्थायित्व सुनिश्चित गर्छ। कमजोर सुशासनले विधिको शासनमा ह्रास ल्याई भ्रष्टाचारलाई बढाई राज्य संयन्त्रको मेरुदण्ड भत्काउँछ। जब राज्यका स्थायी संयन्त्र, सुरक्षा निकाय र प्रशासनमा राजनीतिक सङ्क्रमण हुनजान्छ तब सरकारी संयन्त्रहरू कमजोर हुन्छन्। सरकार थप अप्रभावकारी, न्यायनिरूपणमा ढिलासुस्ती र नागरिकमा राज्यप्रतिको विश्वास कम हुन्छ जसले आन्दोलन, आन्तरिक द्वन्द्व र विदेशी हस्तक्षेपको ढोका खोल्दिन्छ। इतिहासले देखाउँछ सुशासन कमजोर हुँदा आन्तरिक सुरक्षा मात्र होइन, राष्ट्रको अस्तित्व नै सङ्कटमा पर्न सक्छ। विश्वका कतिपय मुलुकहरूमा भ्रष्टाचारकै कारण सरकार विघटन भई अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय हस्तक्षेप भएको दृष्टान्त छन्। यस सन्दर्भमा श्रीलङ्का र बंगलादेश दक्षिण एशियाका उदाहरण हुन्।

जब सुशासन कमजोर हुन्छ, नीति र कानूनको कार्यान्वयन असङ्गत र अनियमित हुन्छ, तब प्रशासनिक तथा सुरक्षा संरचनामा पनि कमजोरी उत्पन्न हुन्छ। ठूला भ्रष्टाचार काण्डहरू तथा उच्च तहका राजनीतिक र प्रशासनिक अधिकारीहरूको नीतिगत दुरुपयोगले केवल आर्थिक नोक्सान मात्र होइन, राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा जोखिम पनि बढाउँछ। नीतिगत तहका अधिकारीहरूको संलग्नताको आरोप लागेका ठूला भ्रष्टाचारजन्य मुद्दाहरूको अनुसन्धान र अभियोजनको निष्पक्षतामाथि प्रश्न उठ्नु, न्यायिक प्रक्रियामा ढिलाइ हुनु, दण्डहीनताले प्रश्रय पाउनु र अनुसन्धान, अभियोजन र न्याय निरूपणमा समेत राजनीतिक संरक्षणको विसङ्गति प्रष्टै देखिनुले राज्यसंयन्त्रमाथि विश्वासको सङ्कट गहिर्दै जान्छ।

नेपालमा संवैधानिक निकायहरूमा दल र उच्च नेता नगिचका पदाधिकारीहरूको नियुक्तिले स्वतन्त्रता र कार्य क्षमता कमजोर हुनगई बढ्दो राजनीतिक हस्तक्षेप तथा निर्णय प्रक्रियामा पारदर्शिताको अभावले उत्तरदायित्व प्रणाली कमजोर बनाएको देखिन्छ। विधिको शासन कमजोर हुँदा राज्यका निकायहरूले कानून र नियमअनुसार कार्य गर्न नसकी नागरिक सुरक्षा, सार्वजनिक पूर्वाधार सुरक्षा र आन्तरिक शान्ति सुव्यवस्थामा प्रत्यक्ष असर पाउँछ। हालैको नवयुवा आन्दोलन यसैको स्पष्ट उदाहरण हो। सम्बन्धित सरकारी संयन्त्रहरूले नवयुवाहरूको सुशासनप्रतिको चासो र जायज गुनासोहरूको समयमै सही सम्बोधन गर्न नसक्दा नेपालमा अस्थिरताको अवस्था उत्पन्न भयो र सुरक्षा सङ्कट चरम सीमामा पुगेको थियो।

दीर्घकालीन दृष्टिकोणबाट हेर्दा, कमजोर सुशासन र विधिको शासनको ह्रासले राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा संरचनालाई बहुआयामिक सङ्कटमा पुऱ्याउँछ। यसले आन्दोलन, सामाजिक असमानता, सघन भ्रष्टाचार, साइबर सुरक्षा जोखिम र मुलुकको अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय साखमा ह्रास आउनेजस्ता चुनौतीहरू उत्पन्न गर्छ। यसैले भ्रष्टाचार नियन्त्रण, मजबुत सुशासन र विधिको शासनले मात्र राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको सबै आयामलाई सुदृढ राख्न सक्ने वातावरण तयार गर्छ।

प्रभावकारी राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको लागि भ्रष्टाचार नियन्त्रणको अपरिहार्यता

प्रभावकारी राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित गर्न भ्रष्टाचार नियन्त्रण अपरिहार्य छ । भ्रष्टाचारले नीति निर्माण, बजेट कार्यान्वयन, सुरक्षा संयन्त्र र कानूनी प्रणालीलाई कमजोर बनाउँछ । जसले आन्तरिक आन्दोलन, अपराध, सीमा सुरक्षा चुनौती, दण्डहीनता र सामाजिक अस्थिरता जन्माउँछ । नेपालजस्तो मुलुकमा जहाँ उच्च तहका नीतिगत भ्रष्टाचार, राजनीतिक संरक्षण र दण्डहीनता मौलाएको छ, त्यहाँ राज्य संयन्त्रले आफ्नो क्षमता पूर्णरूपमा प्रयोग गर्न सक्दैनन् र निर्णय प्रक्रियामा ढिलाइ हुन्छ । भ्रष्टाचार नियन्त्रणबिना प्रशासनिक संयन्त्र, सुरक्षा प्रणाली र न्यायिक निकायबीच सहकार्य कठिन हुन्छ । विकास आयोजनाहरूमा अनियमितता बढ्छ र मुलुकको अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय प्रतिष्ठा कमजोर हुनजान्छ । त्यसैले सुशासन, पारदर्शिता र कानूनको प्रभावकारी कार्यान्वयनसहितको जवाफदेही शासनबाट भ्रष्टाचार नियन्त्रण सम्भव हुनगर्दैन राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाका संयन्त्र र संरचनालाई बलियो र दीर्घकालीन बनाउन सम्भव छ ।

राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको प्रमुख चुनौतीको रूपमा देखिएको भ्रष्टाचार नियन्त्रण गर्न नीतिगत सुधारको आधार तयार गर्न अत्यावश्यक छ । नेपालको सन्दर्भमा नीतिनिर्माण पारदर्शी र सार्वजनिक परामर्शमा आधारित हुनुपर्छ । विकास आयोजना, सार्वजनिक खरिद र बजेट विनियोजनजस्ता महत्त्वपूर्ण निर्णय प्रक्रियामा नागरिक, विशेषज्ञ र स्वतन्त्र निकायको सार्थक सहभागिता अनिवार्य गर्नुपर्छ । निर्वाचन प्रणाली सुधारअन्तर्गत राजनीतिक दल र उम्मेदवारको चुनाव खर्चको सीमा निर्धारण गरी अनिवार्य लेखापरीक्षण लागू गर्नु जरूरी छ । यसले उम्मेदवार र दललाई भ्रष्टाचारजन्य स्रोतबाट आर्जित रकमको अनियन्त्रित खर्च गर्नको लागि रोक्छ । त्यस्तै; राज्यका प्रमुख पदमा प्रवेश गर्नुभन्दा पहिले सदाचारिता परीक्षण (Integrity Test) अनिवार्य गर्नुले उच्चपदस्थ अधिकारी र निर्णयकर्तामा नैतिकता र पारदर्शिताको सुनिश्चितता प्रदान गर्न सक्छ ।

प्रचलित भ्रष्टाचार निवारण ऐनले उच्चपदस्थ अधिकारी र राजनीतिक दलहरूलाई पूर्णरूपमा समेट्न सक्दैन । उक्त कानूनमा गरिने सामयिक सुधारले भ्रष्टाचार नियन्त्रणको प्रणाली र संयन्त्रमा मजबुती ल्याउँछ । उच्च तहमा हुने नीतिगत भ्रष्टाचार प्रकरणहरूलाई समेत अनुसन्धानको प्रत्यक्ष दायरामा ल्याउने कानूनी प्रबन्ध गर्नु अति आवश्यक छ । नीतिगत लगायतका ठूला भ्रष्टाचार प्रकरणको छिटो र प्रभावकारीरूपमा अनुसन्धान तथा कारबाही गर्नु छुट्टै नीतिगत व्यवस्था सहितको विशिष्टीकृत संयन्त्रको स्थापना गर्न पनि उपयुक्त हुन्छ । साथै, दण्डहीनता अन्त्यका लागि सजायलाई कडा बनाउनु अनिवार्य छ; जसले भ्रष्टाचारमा संलग्न व्यक्तिलाई डर त्रास सिर्जना गर्ने तथा सचेत बनाउनेछ ।

भ्रष्टाचार विरुद्धको संस्थागत र व्यावहारिक सुधारले शासकीय सुधारको निरन्तरता र प्रभावकारिता सुनिश्चित गर्छ । अख्तियार दुरुपयोग अनुसन्धान आयोगलाई राजनीतिक हस्तक्षेपमुक्त, पर्याप्त स्रोतसाधन, जनशक्ति र प्राविधिक क्षमतायुक्त बनाउन आवश्यक छ । राष्ट्रिय सतर्कता केन्द्रलाई स्वतन्त्र संवैधानिक निकायका रूपमा रूपान्तरण गरी सुशासन प्रवर्द्धन र भ्रष्टाचार निगरानीमा केन्द्रीय भूमिका प्रदान गर्नुपर्छ । सुरक्षा संयन्त्र र प्रशासनिक निकायहरूमा संस्थागत सुशासनको निम्ति पारदर्शी आन्तरिक नियन्त्रण प्रणाली लागू गर्नु पनि प्रभावकारी कदम हो । व्यावहारिक सुधारअन्तर्गत विद्यालय तहदेखि नै नैतिक शिक्षा अनिवार्य गर्नु, नागरिक सेवा

प्रवाहमा पूर्ण डिजिटलाइजेसन र ई-गभर्नेन्स लागू गर्नु र सार्वजनिक सेवा प्रवाहमा नागरिक निगरानी (Public Audit) प्रणालीलाई कानूनी मान्यता दिनुले पनि दीर्घकालीन रूपमा भ्रष्टाचार नियन्त्रण र सार्वजनिक विश्वास कायम गर्न मद्दत गर्छ ।

नेपालमा नीतिगत भ्रष्टाचार नियन्त्रण र सुशासनको प्रवर्द्धन केवल अस्पष्ट र दोहोरिएका कानून तथा निःसहाय प्रायः बनेका निगरानी संस्थाबाट मात्र सम्भव हुने देखिँदैन । यसको लागि समग्र शासकीय संरचना नै प्रभावकारी र रचनात्मक हुन आवश्यक छ । नीति निर्माण प्रक्रियामा पारदर्शिता, सार्वजनिक परामर्श र विशेषज्ञको सार्थक सहभागिताले मात्र सरकारका निर्णयहरू भ्रष्टाचारमुक्त र जनमुखी बन्न सक्छन् । यसले नीतिगत दुरुपयोग कम गर्ने मात्र होइन; विकास आयोजनाहरूको कुशल व्यवस्थापन र गुणात्मक सेवा प्रवाह एवं सार्वजनिक स्रोतको प्रभावकारी उपयोग सुनिश्चित गर्छ ।

शीघ्र सेवा प्रवाह र तीव्र विकासका लागि प्रशासनको पुनःसंरचना अपरिहार्य छ । यसको अर्थ 'सरकारी कार्यालयहरूलाई विकेन्द्रित, डिजिटलाइज्ड र जिम्मेवार बनाउनु हो । ई-गभर्नेन्स प्रणाली, एकीकृत डाटाबेस, र नागरिक निगरानी प्रणालीले गर्दा भ्रष्टाचारमा कमी आई जनविश्वास बढ्न थाल्छ' । साथै, प्रशासनिक प्रक्रियामा अधिकारको स्पष्टता र जिम्मेवारीको कितानी हुने प्रणाली स्थापित गर्नसके जवाफदेहिता बढ्न गई सेवा प्रवाहमा प्रभावकारिता बढ्छ र विकास आयोजनाहरू समेत तोकिएको लागत, गुणस्तर र समयमा नै सम्पन्न गर्न सकिन्छ ।

समग्रमा, नीतिगत भ्रष्टाचारलाई रोक्ने, सेवा प्रवाहमा सुधार गर्ने र सुशासन प्रवर्द्धन गर्ने कार्य केवल कानूनी सुधार वा आन्तरिक निगरानीमा मात्र सीमित हुँदैन । प्रशासनको रचनात्मक विनिर्माण, जनशक्तिको क्षमता विकास, डिजिटल प्रविधिको उपयोग, नागरिक सहभागिता र निगरानीका संयन्त्रहरूको परिचालन एवं नीति निर्माण प्रक्रियामा पारदर्शिताले मात्र मुलुकको समष्टिगत विकाससहितको दीर्घकालीन समृद्धि सुनिश्चित गर्न सक्छ । जसबाट नेपालको राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा, सामाजिक स्थायित्व र आर्थिक समृद्धि सँगसँगै सुशासनको पूर्ण प्रत्याभूति हुन सक्छ ।

निष्कर्ष

नेपालमा भ्रष्टाचार केवल आर्थिक वा प्रशासनिक समस्या होइन । यो बहुआयामिक राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा प्रणालीको संरचनात्मक चुनौती हो । सुशासन, जवाफदेहिता र पारदर्शिता कमजोर हुँदा राज्यसंयन्त्रप्रतिको जनविश्वास हराउँछ । भ्रष्टाचारले राज्यका सबै तहमा विश्वासको सङ्कट ल्याउँछ । यसले राजनीतिक प्रणाली, प्रशासनिक संरचना, अर्थतन्त्र, न्याय प्रणाली र सुरक्षा संयन्त्रलाई समानरूपमा कमजोर बनाउँछ ।

नेपालको वर्तमान अवस्था हेर्दा भ्रष्टाचार अब केवल विकासको अवरोध मात्र होइन, राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षामाथिको दीर्घकालीन चुनौती भइसकेको छ । नेपालको राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा मजबुत बनाउन भ्रष्टाचारको अन्त्य र सुशासनको पुनःस्थापना अनिवार्य छ । भ्रष्टाचारले नीतिगत निर्णय, आर्थिक सबलता र सामाजिक सामञ्जस्यमा चोट पुऱ्याउन गई परिणाममा सुरक्षा सङ्कट जन्मन्छ । नवयुवा पुस्ताको आन्दोलनले स्पष्ट देखाएको छ कि भ्रष्टाचार र कमजोर सुशासनले शासनलाई मात्र नभई सम्पूर्ण राष्ट्रको अस्तित्वलाई जोखिममा पार्न सक्छ ।

त्यसैले भरपर्दो राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित गर्न राज्यका सबै निकाय पारदर्शी, जवाफदेही र भ्रष्टाचारमुक्त हुनैपर्छ । सुशासन, विधिको शासन र नैतिक नेतृत्वको स्थायी अभ्यासले मात्र मुलुकको दीर्घकालीन स्थायित्व, सामाजिक विश्वास, आर्थिक विकास र राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको बलियो जग सुनिश्चित गर्न सक्छ । अतः भ्रष्टाचारको नियन्त्रण र सुशासनको स्थापना नेपालका लागि केवल शासकीय सुधार मात्र नभई राष्ट्रिय अस्तित्वको रक्षाका लागि नै अपरिहार्य आवश्यकता हो ।

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बलको प्रयोग र मानव अधिकार: एक विश्लेषणात्मक अध्ययन



✍ रोहण यादव

सारसंक्षेप

राज्यलाई सार्वजनिक सुरक्षा, शान्ति, सुव्यवस्था र कानूनको शासन सुदृढ गर्न आवश्यक परे नागरिकविरुद्ध बलको प्रयोग गर्नसक्ने अधिकार भए तापनि उक्त अधिकारको प्रयोग कानूनी, नैतिक तथा मानव अधिकार कानूनले निश्चित गरेको सीमा भित्र हुनु अपरिहार्य हुन्छ। अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय मानवअधिकार कानूनले तोकेका वैधता, आवश्यकता, आनुपातिकता र जवाफदेहिताका सिद्धान्तहरूले बल प्रयोगका दायरा र शर्तहरू निर्दिष्ट गरेका छन्। यस आलोकमा यो अनुसन्धानात्मक लेखले राज्यद्वारा कानून कार्यान्वयनका क्रममा गरिने बलको प्रयोग र त्यसको मानवअधिकारसँगको अन्तःसम्बन्ध गहन विश्लेषण गर्छ। उक्त प्रयोजनार्थ प्रस्तुत लेखमा बलको प्रयोग सम्बन्धी अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय मापदण्डहरूको सूक्ष्म विश्लेषण गर्दै नेपालले सो सम्बन्धमा गरेको विद्यमान कानूनी व्यवस्थाको समेत समीक्षा गर्नेछ। साथै, परिस्थितिको आवश्यकता र आनुपातिकताको आधारमा सुरक्षा अधिकारीले अवलम्बन गर्ने बलको विभिन्न स्तरलाई प्रस्तुत गरिनेछ। यस लेखमा बलको अनुचित र अत्यधिक प्रयोग तथा बलको प्रयोगको वैधता परीक्षण गर्ने मापकहरूबारे उजागर गर्दै कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीले बलको प्रयोग गर्दा आत्मसात् गर्नुपर्ने निर्देशक सिद्धान्तबारे समेत चर्चापरिचर्चा गरिनेछ। अन्त्यमा: यस लेखले राज्यले वैधानिक तवरमा मात्र आवश्यक न्यूनतम बलको प्रयोग गरेर मानव अधिकारको सम्मान, संरक्षण र प्रवर्द्धन गर्नुपर्ने भनी सुझाव प्रदान गरेको छ।

शब्दकुञ्जी:

बलको प्रयोग, मानव अधिकार, आवश्यकता, वैधता इत्यादि

✍ लेखक राष्ट्रिय मानव अधिकार आयोगमा मानव अधिकार सहायक हुनुहुन्छ।

पृष्ठभूमि

मानव सभ्यताको विकासक्रमले राज्यलाई नागरिकको संरक्षक मात्र नभई अभिभावकको स्थान दिएको छ । राज्यले देशभर सुशासन, शान्ति तथा सुव्यवस्था कायम गर्नुका साथै नागरिकको मानव अधिकार रक्षा गर्नुपर्ने अभिभारा बोकेको हुन्छ । मानव अधिकार हरेक मानवले मानव भएकै कारण प्राप्त हुने आधारभूत अधिकारको रूपमा मानिन्छन् । मानिसको जीवन, स्वतन्त्रता, समानता र मर्यादासँग सम्बन्धित संविधान, ऐन कानून तथा नेपाल पक्ष राष्ट्र भएको अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय सन्धिमा व्यवस्था गरिएका आधारभूत अधिकारहरू मानव अधिकार हुन् । (राष्ट्रिय मानव अधिकार आयोग, २०६०) । यी अधिकारहरू सिद्धान्ततः सर्वव्यापी हुने भएकाले हरेक समय र परिस्थितिमा सुनिश्चित गरिएको हुनुपर्छ ।

शक्ति पृथकीकरणको सिद्धान्तबमोजिम व्यवस्थापिकाले तर्जुमा गरेको कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्न कार्यपालिकाले विभिन्न तरिकाहरू अवलम्बन गर्दछ (भण्डारी, २०७६) । जसअन्तर्गत राज्यले आफूले बनाएको कानून वा लिएको निर्णय कार्यान्वयन गर्न तथा राष्ट्रभर शान्ति सुव्यवस्था कायम गर्न आवश्यकता अनुसार नागरिकविरुद्ध बलको प्रयोग (Use of Force) समेत गर्दछ । यसका लागि राज्यमा प्रहरी वा अन्य कुनै सुरक्षा अङ्गलाई बलको प्रयोग गर्ने अधिकार सुम्पिएको हुन्छ । तर, यो निरपेक्ष अधिकार होइन । सिद्धान्ततः राज्यले यो अधिकारको प्रयोग स्वेच्छाचारी तवरमा गर्नुहुँदैन, कानूनी तथा परिस्थितिमूलक सीमाभित्र गर्नुपर्छ । बलको प्रयोग विधिको शासन र मानव अधिकारको मान्यताको समेत प्रतिकूल हुनुहुँदैन । कुनै पनि सभ्य समाजमा वैधानिक कानून कार्यान्वयन र मानव अधिकार उल्लङ्घनबीचको रेखा राज्यले गर्ने बलको प्रयोग गर्दा अपनाउने विकल्प तथा माध्यमले चित्रण गर्छ । त्यसैले अत्यधिक वा अनुचित बलको प्रयोगले लोकतन्त्र र न्यायको धरातललाई कमजोर बनाउँछ भन्नेमा दुईमत हुन सक्दैन ।

अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय मानवअधिकार कानूनहरूले बलको प्रयोगको मानव अधिकारको आलोकमा निश्चित दायरा स्पष्ट रूपमा निर्धारण गरेको छ । यी कानूनी दस्तावेजहरूले व्यक्तिको जीवन, स्वतन्त्रता र सुरक्षाको अधिकार सम्बन्धमा राज्यलाई उत्तरदायी बनाउने प्रयास गरेको देखिन्छ । विशेषतः प्रहरी तथा सुरक्षा संयन्त्रले बलको प्रयोग गर्दा मानव अधिकारको विषय अत्यधिक संवेदनशील हुन जान्छ । आफूलाई सुरक्षा गर्ने निकायले नै आफूविरुद्ध बल प्रयोग गर्ने यस्तो परिस्थितिमा मानव अधिकारको उल्लङ्घन हुने सम्भावना समेत प्रचुर रहेको हुन्छ ।

दश (१०) वर्षे जनयुद्ध एवं शान्तिनिर्माणको चरणमा र नेपालमा विभिन्न समयमा भएका आन्दोलनहरूमा मानव अधिकारका विषय ओभ्रेलमा पर्ने गरेका तथ्याङ्क विभिन्न अध्ययन संस्थाहरूले सार्वजनिक गरेका छन् । यस्तै, राष्ट्रिय मानव अधिकार आयोगले २०८२ भाद्र २३ र २४ गतेको जेनजी विद्रोहमा आयोगबाट भएको मानव अधिकार अवस्थाको अनुगमनपश्चात् प्रकाशित प्रतिवेदनमा मानव अधिकारको गम्भीर उल्लङ्घन भएको उल्लेख गरेको थियो (राष्ट्रिय मानव अधिकार आयोग, २०८२) । यसै पृष्ठभूमिमा प्रस्तुत लेखमा नेपालको सन्दर्भलाई केन्द्रमा राखेर मानव अधिकारको दृष्टिले बलको प्रयोगको विश्लेषणात्मक अध्ययन गरिएको छ ।

बलको प्रयोगको परिचय

बलको प्रयोगको सम्बन्धमा कुनै विश्वव्यापी परिभाषा छैन । सामान्य अर्थमा बलको प्रयोग भन्नाले नागरिकसँगको अन्तरक्रियामा प्रहरी वा कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीले अपनाउने शारीरिक वा अन्य प्रकारको बललाई बुझ्न सकिन्छ (Thapa, 2020) । इन्टरनेशनल एसोसिएसन अफ चीफ अफ पुलिसले बलको प्रयोग भनेको “विद्यमान कानून वा निर्णय नमान्ने व्यक्तिलाई सो पालना गराउन पुलिसले गर्ने प्रयासको मात्रा” को रूपमा परिभाषित गरेको छ (ASCI, 2020) । उक्त संस्थाले आफ्नो परिभाषामा कुनै पनि राष्ट्र सार्वभौमसत्ता सम्पन्न भएकाले आफ्नो आन्तरिक सम्प्रभुता (Internal Sovereignty) को आधारमा आफ्नो नागरिकलाई नियन्त्रण गर्न बलको प्रयोग गर्न वैधानिकता प्राप्त गर्ने उल्लेख गरेको छ ।

अन्तराष्ट्रिय रेडक्रस सोसाइटीले अनुसार बलको प्रयोगलाई यसरी परिभाषित गरेको छ:- (ICRC, 2020)

सार्वजनिक सुरक्षा- कानून र शान्ति कायम वा पुनःस्थापना गर्न सञ्चालन गरिने कार्यहरू (Operations)- जसलाई सामान्यतया कानून कार्यान्वयनका कार्यहरू भनिन्छ । सो कार्य गर्दा राज्यका अधिकारीहरूले विभिन्न उपायहरू अवलम्बन गर्छन् । त्यसमा अत्यावश्यक अवस्थामा, विशेष परिस्थितिमा बलको प्रयोग समेत हुनसक्छ । बलको प्रयोग भन्ने शब्द सामान्यतया राष्ट्रिय कानूनमा परिभाषित गरिएको हुन्छ । तथापि; सामान्यरूपमा यसले कानून कार्यान्वयनका कार्यहरू गर्दा कुनै व्यक्तिमाथि गरिने नियन्त्रण तथा प्रतिबन्ध जनाउँछ । यसमा हातले गरिएको शारीरिक नियन्त्रण वा नियन्त्रण उपकरण (जस्तै हतकडी) प्रयोग, ‘कम घातक’ हतियारहरू:- जस्तै लड्डी, अश्रुग्याँस, विद्युतीय झटका दिने उपकरण (सामान्यतया टेजर भनिने) र रबरका गोलादेखि लिएर हतियार (Firearms) र अन्य सम्भावित ‘घातक बल’ सम्मका उपायहरू समावेश हुन्छन् ।

बल प्रयोग गर्न तीन तत्त्वको विद्यमानता हुनुपर्छ भन्ने धारणा अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय कानूनमा रहेको पाइन्छ । पहिलो: व्यक्तिसँग कुनै हतियार वा माध्यम (Weapons/Means) जस्तै मुठी, चाकु, बन्दुक इत्यादि हुनुपर्छ । दोस्रो: कसैलाई हानि नोक्सानी वा क्षति पुऱ्याउने मनसाय (Intent) हुनुपर्छ । तेस्रो: सो माध्यम प्रयोग गर्ने वैधानिक क्षमता (Ability) पनि हुनु आवश्यक हुन्छ । यस अर्थमा कुनै पनि सुरक्षा अधिकारीले बलको प्रयोग गर्नुपूर्व माथि उल्लिखित अवस्था भएको सुनिश्चित गरेको हुनुपर्छ । अन्यथा बलको प्रयोगले वैधता प्राप्त गर्दैन । (Cook, 2020) यसर्थ; बलको प्रयोग उद्देश्यपरक हुनुपर्छ । आधारहीन वा स्वेच्छाचारी हुनु हुँदैन । अवैधानिक बलको प्रयोग कानूनबमोजिम दण्डनीय र आपराधिक कार्य मानिन्छ ।

तसर्थ, बलको प्रयोग कानून कार्यान्वयनका लागि आवश्यक र अपरिहार्य तत्त्व भए तापनि यसको वैधानिकता कानूनद्वारा निर्धारित सीमालगायत अधिकारीको कानूनी क्षमतामा समेत भर पर्छ । अनुचित वा अत्यधिक बलको प्रयोगले सिङ्गो लोकतन्त्रलाई नै प्रतिकूल असर गर्ने भएकोले कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने कर्मचारीले गर्ने बलको प्रयोग न्याय सङ्गत हुनु अपरिहार्य हुन्छ ।

बलको प्रयोगका सिद्धान्तहरू

कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीले गर्ने बलको प्रयोग वैधानिक हुनुपर्ने सम्बन्धमा केही सिद्धान्तहरू रहेका छन् । यी सिद्धान्तहरू बलको प्रयोगको सम्बन्धमा मार्गनिर्देशक सिद्धान्तका रूपमा रहनुका साथै त्यसको वैधता मापन गर्ने आधारशिला समेत हुन् । सुरक्षा अधिकारीले बलको प्रयोग गर्दा देहायका सिद्धान्तहरू अनुसरण गरेर मात्र गर्नुपर्छ ।

आवश्यकताको सिद्धान्त (The principle of necessity): कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने निकाय वा प्रहरी संयन्त्रले स्वेच्छाचारी तवरले बलको प्रयोग गर्न मिल्दैन । बलको प्रयोग परिस्थितिको विद्यमानता र आवश्यकताले निर्धारण गर्छ । यस अन्तर्गत तीन अन्तर्निहित तत्त्वहरू छन् । (UNODC, 2019) पहिलो: सम्भव भएसम्म अहिंसात्मक विकल्प अवलम्बन गर्नुपर्ने । दोस्रो: वैधानिक कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने उद्देश्यले मात्र बलको प्रयोग गर्नुपर्ने र तेस्रो: विद्यमान परिस्थितिको आलोकमा न्यूनतम मनासिब बलको प्रयोग गर्नुपर्ने ।

आनुपातिकताको सिद्धान्त (The principle of proportionality): कुनै पनि कानून कार्यान्वयन अधिकारीले सम्भावित जोखिमलाई न्यूनीकरण गर्न अधिकतम बलको प्रयोगको हद आनुपातिकताको सिद्धान्तले निर्धारण गरिन्छ । आनुपातिकता सम्भावित खतरा र तोकिएको कानूनी उद्देश्यको आधारमा निर्धारण गरिन्छ । कुनै व्यक्तिले लाठीले आक्रमण गर्दा बन्दुकले गोली प्रहार गर्नु यो सिद्धान्तको प्रतिकूल हुन्छ ।

पूर्व सावधानीको दायित्व (The Duty of Precaution): तेस्रो सिद्धान्तले 'आवश्यकता' र 'आनुपातिकता' सम्बन्धी सिद्धान्तहरूको पूर्वाधार (precursor) को रूपमा कार्य गर्छ । (Geneva Academy, 2016) यस सिद्धान्त अनुसार कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीले कानून कार्यान्वयनका कार्यहरू (Operation) को योजना गर्दा कम से कम जनधनको क्षति हुने तरिकाले गर्नुपर्छ ।

वैधानिकताको सिद्धान्त (The Doctrine of Legitimacy): कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीले गर्ने बलको प्रयोग कानून सम्मत अर्थात् कानूनले प्रदान गरेको अधिकारको दायरा अन्तर्गत हुनुपर्छ ।

बलको प्रयोगको स्तर

कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीहरूले कुनै पनि घटना नियन्त्रणमा लिन, कसैलाई पक्राउ गर्न, वा आफू वा अरूलाई हानिबाट जोगाउन आवश्यक मात्रामा मात्र बलको प्रयोग गर्नुपर्छ । प्रहरीले प्रयोग गर्ने बलका तहहरू (continuum of force) विभिन्न स्तरका हुन्छन् (NIJ, 2020) । यसअन्तर्गत; साधारण मौखिक नियन्त्रण, शारीरिक नियन्त्रण, कम-घातक (less-lethal) बलको प्रयोग र अन्ततः घातक (lethal) बलको प्रयोग सम्मका उपायहरू पर्छन् । बलको प्रयोगलाई देहायका स्तरहरूमा विभाजित गर्न सकिन्छ:

अधिकारीको उपस्थिति (Officer Presence): (NIJ, 2009) यसमा बलको प्रयोग हुँदैन । अधिकारीको उपस्थितिले नै अपराध घटाउने (deterrence) वा तनावपूर्ण अवस्थालाई शान्त पार्ने (diffuse a situation) कार्य गर्न सक्छ । यसलाई बल प्रयोगको स्तरमा राख्नु हुँदैन भन्ने मान्यता पनि रहेको छ ।

मौखिक निर्देशन (Verbalization): यसमा अधिकारीले आन्दोलनकारी (subject) लाई मौखिक रूपले शान्ति कायम राख्न वा कानून पालना गर्न अनुरोध गर्छन् । यसमा मुख्यतः माइकिङ गर्ने काम पर्छ ।

शारीरिक नियन्त्रण (Empty-Hand Control): यसमा अधिकारीले परिस्थितिलाई आफ्नो नियन्त्रणमा ल्याउन शारीरिक शक्तिहरूको प्रयोग गर्छन्। यसअन्तर्गत व्यक्तिलाई नियन्त्रणमा लिन समात्ने, थाम्ने र जोड लक (joint locks) जस्ता सफ्ट टेक्निक र नियन्त्रणमा लिन हात/घुँडाले प्रहार (पन्च र किक) जस्ता हार्ड टेक्निक अपनाउन सकिन्छ।

कम घातक बलको प्रयोग (Less-Lethal Method): गम्भीर चोट (serious injury), अङ्गभङ्ग र मृत्यु हुने सम्भावना नहुनेगरी डिजाइन गरिएका यन्त्रहरू कम घातक बलको श्रेणीमा पर्दछन्। (NUSTL, 2019) यसको प्रयोग मुख्यतः दुई परिस्थितिमा हुन्छ; भिड नियन्त्रण (crowd control) र एकल सन्देहीको नियन्त्रण/पक्राउ (one-on-one suspect apprehension)। यस अन्तर्गत अश्रु ग्याँस, फोहोराको प्रयोग इत्यादि पर्दछन्।

घातक बलको प्रयोग (Lethal Force): कसैको मृत्यु हुनसक्ने सम्भावना भएको बल घातक बल हो। (Havengear, n.d.) यो प्रायः बन्दुक वा अन्य घातक हतियारको प्रयोगसँग जोडिएको हुन्छ। यसलाई विरलै अवस्था (rarest of the rarest) मा मात्र प्रयोग गर्न सकिन्छ।

संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिकाको पुलिस एग्जिक्युटिभ रिसर्च फोरमका अनुसार कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीले बलको प्रयोग गर्दा केही निर्देशक सिद्धान्तको आधारमा गर्नुपर्छ। (PERF, 2016) यी सिद्धान्तहरू बलको वैधानिक प्रयोग सम्बन्धी सर्वमान्य मूल्य र मान्यतामा आधारित छन्। यी सिद्धान्तहरूले निर्देशित गरेका केही आधारभूत मापदण्डहरू निम्न बमोजिम छन्:-

- कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने कार्यालय वा अधिकारीको काम वा कर्तव्यको केन्द्रविन्दु मानव जीवनको गरिमा (Sanctity of Human Life) हुनुपर्छ।
- बलको प्रयोग विद्यमान परिस्थितिको गम्भीरता र आवश्यकताको अनुपातमा मात्र हुनुपर्छ। अधिकारीले उद्देश्य प्राप्तिका हेतु उपलब्ध विकल्पहरूमध्ये न्यून हानि नोक्सानी हुने विकल्प अवलम्बन गर्नुपर्छ।
- तनावपूर्ण स्थिति न्यूनीकरणलाई (De-escalation) मुख्य नीतिको रूपमा अङ्गीकार गर्नुपर्छ।
- उपल्लो सुरक्षा अधिकारीले आफू मातहतका अन्य अधिकारीहरूलाई अत्यधिक बलको प्रयोग गर्नबाट रोक्ने हस्तक्षेपकारी भूमिका निर्वाह गर्नुपर्छ।
- सुरक्षा अधिकारीले घाइतेहरूलाई तुरुन्तै प्राथमिक उपचार उपलब्ध गराउनु पर्छ।
- सवारी साधनमा गोली चलाउनु हुँदैन।
- अरूलाई खतरा सृजना नगर्नेको विरुद्ध घातक बल प्रयोग गर्नु हुँदैन।
- बलको प्रयोग भएको घटनाहरूको उचित अभिलेख राख्नुपर्छ।
- नागरिकसँगको विश्वास र समझदारी कायम राख्न बलको प्रयोग सम्बन्धी आद्यावधिक प्रतिवेदन प्रकाशन गर्नुपर्छ।
- मृत्यु वा गम्भीर घाइते भएका प्रहरी घटनाहरूको समीक्षा (review) विशेष अधिकारीबाट गराउनु पर्छ र त्यसलाई आगामी भविष्यमा रोक्न हरसम्भव प्रयास गर्नुपर्छ।

बलको अनुचित प्रयोग

राज्यले प्रयोग गर्न सक्ने बलको एउटा सीमा हुन्छ। निश्चित मापदण्ड हुन्छ। कानूनले निर्धारण गरेको सीमा र प्रदान गरेको अधिकार प्रतिकूल कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीले बलको प्रयोग गरे बलको अनुचित प्रयोग गरेको मानिन्छ। (पन्थी, २०८२) कर्मचारीले परिस्थितिको आवश्यकताको आधारमा भिड नियन्त्रण र शान्ति पुनःस्थापनाका लागि उचित विकल्प छान्नुपर्छ। क्षति र हानि नोक्सानी न्यून हुने विकल्प प्राथमिकतामा हुनुपर्छ।

आन्दोलनरत आन्दोलनकारी वा भिडमा व्यक्तिलाई टाउकामा ताकेर हान्नु तथा गम्भीर घाइते बनाउने गरी लाठीचार्ज गर्ने वा शान्तिपूर्ण भिडमा अश्रुग्याँस हान्नु वा रबर वा अन्य गोली लापरवाहीपूर्ण तरिकाले प्रयोग गरे भिडमा अनुचित बलको प्रयोग गरेको मानिन्छ। (UNOHCHR, 2063) अमेरिकी सर्वोच्च अदालतले आफ्नो केही प्रतिनिधिमूलक फैसलाहरूमा बलको अनुचित प्रयोगको विषयलाई परिभाषित गर्ने प्रयास गरेको देख्न सकिन्छ। अमेरिकी सर्वोच्च अदालतले ब्रेनडिन विरुद्ध क्यालिफोर्नियाको मुद्दा कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीले पक्राउ वा अनुसन्धानको क्रममा वा जफत गर्दा कानून बमोजिमको मापदण्डभन्दा अत्यधिक बलको प्रयोग गरेको वा सो प्रयोग घातक हो होइन निर्धारण गर्नुपरे 'वस्तुनिष्ठ व्यावहारिकता (Objective Reasonableness)' को आधारमा गरिनु पर्छ भन्ने नजीर स्थापित गरेको छ। त्यस्तै, ग्राहम विरुद्ध कोनरको मुद्दामा यसलाई तीन तत्त्वको आधारमा विश्लेषण गर्नुपर्छ भनी व्याख्या भएको छ। पहिलो: कसूरको गम्भीरता, दोस्रो: कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारी वा अरु कसैको ज्यान वा सुरक्षालाई तत्काल खतरा थियो थिएन; र तेस्रो: पक्राउ परेका व्यक्ति प्रतिरोध गरिरहेको वा भ्रम, उम्कन प्रयासरत थिए कि थिएनन्।

वि.सं. २०७२ को मधेस आन्दोलनका क्रममा दायर भएको विस्मिल्लाह खातुनविरुद्ध प्रधानमन्त्री तथा मन्त्रपरिषद्को कार्यालयसमेतको मुद्दामा (श्रेष्ठ, २०७२) नेपालको सर्वोच्च अदालतको माननीय न्यायाधीशद्वय वैद्यनाथ उपाध्याय र माननीय न्यायाधीश दीपकराज जोशीको इजलासले तराई, मधेशलगायत देशका विभिन्न भागमा भइरहेको आन्दोलनमा घातक बलको प्रयोग गरी ज्यानै जानेगरी गोली चलाउने कुरालाई अत्यधिक बल प्रयोगको रूपमा उल्लेख गर्दै स्थानीय प्रशासन ऐन, २०२८ ले तोकेको मापदण्डबमोजिम नै बल प्रयोग गर्न गराउन अन्तरिम आदेश दिएको थियो।

बलको प्रयोगसम्बन्धी अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय मापदण्ड

मानव अधिकारको विश्वव्यापी घोषणापत्रले धारा ५ मा कुनै पनि व्यक्तिलाई शारीरिक यातना दिइने वा क्रूर, अमानवीय वा अपमानजनक व्यवहार वा सजाय गर्नबाट निषेध गरेको छ। यातना तथा अन्य क्रूर, अमानवीय वा अपमानजनक व्यवहार वा सजाय विरुद्धको महासन्धि, १८८४ ले पक्ष राष्ट्रहरूलाई यातनाजन्य गतिविधि नगर्न र हुन नदिन दायित्व स्थापित गरेको छ। (यादव, २०८२) त्यस्तै; नागरिक तथा राजनीतिक अधिकार सम्बन्धी अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय प्रतिज्ञापत्र, १९६६ ले धारा ९ मा कसैलाई पनि स्वेच्छाचारीरूपले पक्राउ वा थुनामा राख्न निषेध गरी प्रत्येक व्यक्तिलाई स्वतन्त्रता तथा सुरक्षाको अधिकार सुनिश्चित गरेको छ। पक्राउ गरिएको व्यक्तिलाई पक्राउ गर्ने समयमा निजलाई पक्राउ गरेको कारणसहितको सूचना दिनुपर्छ। यस सम्बन्धमा देहायका विशिष्टीकृत कानूनहरू रहेका छन्:-

कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीको बल तथा हतियारको प्रयोग सम्बन्धी आधारभूत सिद्धान्त (Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials) १९९०

कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीको न्याय प्रशासन तथा व्यक्तिको जीवन, स्वतन्त्रता र सुरक्षामा हुने महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका तथा सार्वजनिक सुरक्षा र सामाजिक शान्ति कायम राख्ने दायित्व भएकोले राज्यहरूलाई कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीको उचित भूमिका तथा राष्ट्रिय कानून र अभ्यासका लागि संयुक्त राष्ट्र सङ्घले सन् १९९० मा कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीको बल तथा हतियारको प्रयोगसम्बन्धी आधारभूत सिद्धान्त, १९९० नमुना फ्रेमवर्कको रूपमा जारी गरेको छ । यसमा भएका २६ वटा आधारभूत सिद्धान्तहरूलाई देहायअनुसार ६ भागमा विभाजित गरिएका छन्:-

समान्य प्रावधान

- सरकार तथा कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने निकायले कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीले कुनै व्यक्तिविरुद्ध बल र हातहतियारको प्रयोग गर्ने सम्बन्धी निश्चित नियम बनाएको हुनुपर्ने,
- कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीले आफ्नो दायित्व निर्वाह गर्दा शान्ति पुनःस्थापनाको निमित्त अरू कुनै पनि वैकल्पिक उपाय नरहे मात्र बल र हतियारको प्रयोग गर्नुपर्छ,
- बल र हतियारको प्रयोग अपरिहार्य भएको अवस्थामा कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीले निम्नानुसार गर्नुपर्छ:
 - कसूरको गम्भीरताको अनुपात तथा वैधानिक उद्देश्य प्राप्तिको लागि मात्र बलको सीमित प्रयोग,
 - क्षति र घाइते न्यूनीकरण गर्ने र मानव जीवनको सम्मान र संरक्षण गर्ने,
 - घाइते वा प्रभावित व्यक्तिलाई छिटो, छरितो स्वास्थ्य तथा अन्य आवश्यक सहायता गर्ने,
 - घाइते वा प्रभावित व्यक्तिको आफन्तलाई सम्भव भएसम्म तत्कालै सूचना प्रवाह गर्ने,
- बल र हतियारको प्रयोगले घाइते वा ज्यान गएमा तुरुन्तै आफूभन्दा माथि क्रमका पदाधिकारीलाई जानकारी गराउने,
- कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीको स्वेच्छाचारी र दुरुपयोगपूर्ण बल र हतियारको प्रयोगलाई कानून अन्तर्गत अपराधसरह दण्डनीय बनाउने,
- आन्तरिक राजनीतिक अस्थिरता वा अन्य कुनै सार्वजनिक सङ्कट जस्ता असाधारण परिस्थिति विद्यमान भएकै कारणले यी आधारभूत सिद्धान्त विपरीत कार्य गर्न न्यायोचित नहुने,

विशेष प्रावधान

- आत्म रक्षा वा अरूको प्रतिरक्षा बाहेकको परिस्थितिमा कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीले कुनै व्यक्ति विरुद्ध बल र हतियारको प्रयोग गर्न नहुने,

- ज्यानको जोखिम हुने गम्भीर अपराध रोक्न वा त्यस्तो अपराध गर्ने व्यक्तिलाई पक्राउ गर्न वा उम्कन नदिन र अन्य विकल्प अपर्याप्त भए मात्र बल र हतियारको प्रयोग गर्न हुने,
- कुनै पनि अवस्था भए ज्यान रक्षार्थ मात्र बलको घातक (लिथल) मनसायपूर्ण प्रयोग गर्न हुने,
- कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीले हतियारको प्रयोग गर्नुअगाडि पर्याप्त समयसहित स्पष्ट चेतावनी दिनु पर्ने,
- कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीको हतियारको प्रयोग सम्बन्धी नियम र नियमावलीले देहायका मार्गनिर्देशन गर्नु पर्ने:
 - कुन परिस्थिति र कुन प्रकारको हतियार बोक्न अनुमति पाएको,
 - हतियारको प्रयोग उचित परिस्थिति र अनावश्यक हानिको जोखिम न्यूनीकरणमा हुने सुनिश्चितता,
 - अनुचित हानि वा जोखिम हुनेगरी हतियारको प्रयोगमा निषेध,
 - कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीको हतियार प्रयोगप्रति जवाफदेहिता सहित हतियारको नियन्त्रण, भण्डारण र वितरण सम्बन्धी व्यवस्था,
 - हतियार प्रयोग गर्नु अगावै चेतावनी दिने,
 - ड्युटी अन्तर्गत हतियार प्रयोग गर्दा रेपोर्टिङ प्रणालीको व्यवस्था,

गैरकानूनी भेलामा प्रहरीको कार्य (Policing)

- शान्तिपूर्ण भेला गैरकानूनी भए पनि बलको प्रयोग गर्न नहुने । आवश्यक नै भए न्यून स्तरको बलको प्रयोग गर्नुपर्ने,
- हिंसात्मक भेलामा अरु वैकल्पिक उपाय नभए मात्र आवश्यक न्यूनतम अनुपातमा हतियारको प्रयोग गर्नु पर्ने,

थुना वा हिरासतमा रहेका व्यक्तिसम्बन्धी प्रहरीको कार्य (Policing):

- कार्यालयमा सुरक्षा र व्यवस्था कायम राख्नु बाहेक थुना वा हिरासतमा रहेका व्यक्तिविरुद्ध बलको प्रयोग गर्न नहुने,
- ज्यान जान सक्ने जोखिम भएको अवस्थामा आत्मरक्षा वा अरुको प्रतिरक्षा र हिरासत वा थुनाबाट उम्कन नदिन मात्र हतियारको प्रयोग गर्न मिल्ने,

योग्यता, प्रशिक्षण र परामर्श:

- सरकार तथा कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने निकायले अधिकारीहरू आफ्नो ड्युटी प्रभावकारी तवरले सम्पादन गर्न आवश्यक नैतिक, मनोवैज्ञानिक र शारीरिक हैसियतले सक्षम छन्/छैनन् र सोको आवधिक मूल्याङ्कन गर्ने सम्बन्धी व्यवस्था सुनिश्चित गरेको हुनुपर्ने,
- बल र हतियारको प्रयोगसम्बन्धी आवश्यक मापदण्ड अनुरूपको विशेष प्रशिक्षण दिनुपर्ने,
- त्यस्ता प्रशिक्षणमा प्रहरीको पेशागत नैतिकता र मानव अधिकारलाई विशेष जोड दिनुपर्ने,

रिपोर्टिङ र मूल्याङ्कन सम्बन्धी कार्यविधि

- उल्लिखित सिद्धान्तप्रतिकूल कुनै घटना भए सोको रिपोर्टिङ तथा मूल्याङ्कन गरी स्वतन्त्र प्रशासनिक वा अभियोजन निकाय समक्ष पेस गर्ने प्रभावकारी प्रणालीको व्यवस्था,
- बल र हतियारको प्रयोगले प्रभावित व्यक्तिलाई न्यायिक प्रक्रियासहितको स्वतन्त्र प्रक्रियाको व्यवस्था,
- बल र हतियारको प्रयोग गैरकानूनी भएमा वा सो रोक्न, दबाउन वा रिपोर्ट गर्न आवश्यक प्रयास नगरेको निर्देशन दिने उच्च पदाधिकारी जिम्मेवार हुने व्यवस्था सुनिश्चित गरेको,
- बल र हतियारको प्रयोग गैरकानूनी हो भनी जानीजानी वा सो निर्देशन पालना गर्न इन्कार गर्न सकिने भए कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीको बल र हतियारको प्रयोगले कसैको ज्यान गए वा गम्भीर घाइते भए सुपरियर अर्डर प्रतिरक्षामा लिन नमिल्ने,

कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीको आचारसंहिता (UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials), १९७९

१७ डिसेम्बर सन् १९७९ मा संयुक्त राष्ट्र महासङ्घबाट पारित भएको कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीको आचारसंहितामा ८ वटा धाराहरू रहेका छन्। यस आचारसंहिताको प्रयोजनार्थ 'कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने अधिकारीलाई प्रहरीसरह काम (पुलिस फड्गक्सन) गर्ने, विशेषगरी हिरासत वा थुनामा राख्ने अधिकार प्राप्त कानून बमोजिम नियुक्त वा निर्वाचित अधिकारी' भनेर परिभाषित गरिएको छ। यस आचारसंहितामा देहायका मुख्य व्यवस्थाहरू रहेका छन्:-

- कानूनले निर्धारण गरेको काम कर्तव्य गर्ने र उच्च पेसागत आचरण कायम राखी सबै व्यक्तिलाई गैरकानूनी कार्यबाट सुरक्षा तथा समुदायलाई आवश्यक सेवा प्रवाह गर्ने,
- आफ्नो ड्युटी निर्वाह गर्दा सबै व्यक्तिको मानमर्यादा तथा मानव अधिकारको संरक्षण र प्रवर्द्धन गर्ने,
- बलको प्रयोग अत्यावश्यक भए परिस्थितिको आवश्यकताको हदसम्म मात्र गर्नुपर्ने,
- गोप्य प्रकृतिका सूचना तथा जानकारी कर्तव्य पालना गर्न वा न्याय निरूपणको प्रयोजनबाहेक सार्वजनिक गर्न नहुने,
- यातना तथा अन्य क्रूर, अमानवीय वा अपमानजनक व्यवहार वा सजायको कुनै कार्य सहन वा उक्साउन नहुने र सुपरियर अर्डर वा युद्ध वा युद्धको जोखिम, राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षामा खतरा, आन्तरिक राजनीतिक अस्थिरता जस्ता अन्य असामान्य परिस्थिति विद्यमान भएकै कारण सो कार्यहरू वैधानिक नहुने,
- हिरासतमा भएका व्यक्तिको आवश्यकता अनुसार स्वास्थ्य जाँच गराउनुका साथै सो व्यक्ति पूर्णरूपले स्वस्थ रहेको सुनिश्चित गर्ने,
- भ्रष्टाचार नगर्ने र अरूलाई समेत गर्न नदिने,
- प्रचलित कानून तथा यो आचारसंहिताको सम्मान गर्ने र अरूलाई पनि कानून उल्लङ्घन गर्नबाट रोक्ने,

बलको प्रयोग सम्बन्धी राष्ट्रिय कानून

नेपालमा सुरक्षाकर्मीहरूले बल प्रयोग गर्ने प्रक्रिया कडा कानूनी र नैतिक मापदण्डहरूको अधीनमा रहेको छ । सुरक्षाकर्मीहरूले बल प्रयोगसम्बन्धी निर्णय गर्दा आत्मरक्षा, सार्वजनिक सुरक्षा र अत्यधिक बलको निषेधका मापदण्डहरूलाई ध्यानमा राखेर विवेकपूर्ण र कानूनी आधारमा निर्णय गर्नुपर्छ । (कोइराला, २०७६) अनावश्यक बलको प्रयोगबाट बच्न र मानवाधिकारको उल्लङ्घन नगर्न कडा निगरानी र कानूनी व्यवस्था सुनिश्चित गरिएको छ । जसअन्तर्गत भएका मुख्य कानूनी व्यवस्थाहरू देहायबमोजिम वर्णन गरिएका छन्:-

स्थानीय प्रशासन ऐन, २०२८

स्थानीय प्रशासन सम्बन्धी कानूनलाई सङ्घीय प्रशासन व्यवस्थाअनुरूप संशोधन र एकीकरण गर्न तथा शान्ति र व्यवस्था कायम राख्न लागू गरिएको स्थानीय प्रशासन ऐन, २०२८ को दफा ६ ले जिल्लाको प्रमुख जिल्ला अधिकारीलाई कुनै हिंसात्मक काम कारबाही वा हुलदङ्गा जस्तो कार्यलाई रोक्न तथा नियन्त्रण गर्न आवश्यक निर्देशनमा प्रहरी परिचालन गर्न सक्ने अधिकार दिएको छ । उपदफा १(क) ले कुनै सभा जुलुस वा भिडले हिंसात्मक वा ध्वंसात्मक प्रवृत्ति लिई त्यसको कुनै काम कारबाहीबाट शान्ति भङ्ग हुने सम्भावना देखिएमा प्रहरी द्वारा रोक्न लगाउने र प्रहरीले नियन्त्रण गर्न नसकेकोमा सम्बन्धित ठाउँमा तुरुन्तै आफैँ गई वा आफू मातहतका अधिकृतलाई पठाई सकेसम्म सम्झाई शान्ति कायम गराउने र नसकेमा प्रहरीको मद्दतले लाठी चार्ज, अश्रुग्याँस, फोहरा र हवाई फायर समेत आवश्यकता र परिस्थितिअनुसार जो गर्नु पर्ने बल प्रयोग गरी शान्ति कायम गर्न गराउन सक्ने व्यवस्था छ । उपर्युक्त तरिकाले पनि नियन्त्रण हुन नसके उपदफा १(ख) बमोजिम प्रहरीले आवश्यकता परे गोली चलाउन सक्छ । तर गोली चलाउनुपूर्व प्रहरीले भिडलाई हट्न भिडले बुझ्नेगरी चेतावनी दिनुपर्छ र त्यसरी गोली चलाउँदा घुडामुनि मात्र प्रहार गर्नुपर्ने स्पष्ट व्यवस्था छ । दफा ६(क) को उपदफा (४) ले प्रमुख जिल्ला अधिकारीले जारी गरेको कर्पुर् आदेशको पालना नगरे परिस्थितिअनुसार लाठी चार्जदेखि गोली चलाउनेसम्मको उपर्युक्त उल्लिखित क्रममा बलको प्रयोग गर्न सक्छ ।

नेपालमा प्रहरीले यी विद्यमान कानून अनुसार बलको प्रयोग दुई सिद्धान्तमा आधारित रही गर्छन्:- आवश्यकताको सिद्धान्त (Doctrine of Necessity) र बलको आनुपातिक प्रयोगको सिद्धान्त (Doctrine of Proportionality) । यस ऐनले परिस्थितिले आवश्यक भए शान्ति सुव्यवस्था कायम गर्ने उद्देश्यले मात्र बलको प्रयोग गर्न सकिने स्पष्ट गरेको छ । साथै बलको प्रयोग गर्दा अवस्थालाई नियन्त्रण गर्न आवश्यक स्तरको बल मात्र प्रयोग गर्नुपर्छ । सुरुमा लाठी चार्ज, फोहराको प्रयोग, अश्रुग्याँसको प्रयोग जस्तो सामान्य स्तरको बल मात्र प्रयोग गर्नुपर्छ । सो गर्दा समेत नियन्त्रण नभए मात्र गोली चलाउने जस्तो घातक बलको प्रयोग गर्नुपर्छ । यसर्थ; प्रहरीले गर्ने बलको प्रयोग स्वेच्छाचारी हुनसक्दैन, परिस्थितिलाई मध्यनजर गरी स्थानीय प्रशासन ऐनले निर्धारण गरेको दायराभित्र रहेर मात्र आवश्यक बलको प्रयोग गर्नुपर्छ ।

प्रहरी ऐन, २०१२

प्रहरी ऐनले स्पष्ट रूपले प्रहरीले के कस्तो बलको कुन परिस्थितिमा प्रयोग गर्नसक्ने बारे स्पष्ट व्यवस्था गरेको छैन । यद्यपि; प्रहरीलाई बल प्रयोग गर्ने सम्बन्धी प्रहरीको कर्तव्यअन्तर्गत अप्रत्यक्ष रूपमा अधिकार

प्रत्यायोजित गरेको छ । नेपालको संविधानले धारा १७(२)(ख) मा प्रत्येक नागरिकलाई विना हातहतियार शान्तिपूर्वक भेला हुने स्वतन्त्रता प्रदान गरेको छ । ऐनको दफा १९ मा सार्वजनिक बाटो, सडक वा आवत- जावत हुने स्थानमा सभा गर्ने वा जुलुस निकाल्ने सम्बन्धमा जनसाधारणलाई असुविधा पर्ने वा शान्ति भङ्ग हुने स्थिति उत्पन्न हुन नदिन प्रमुख जिल्ला अधिकारीबाट अख्तियार प्राप्त गरेको प्रहरी अधिकृतले सभा वा जुलुसका निमित्त तोकेको ठाउँ, बाटो र समयविपरीत कुनै कार्य भए गरेको पाएमा प्रहरीले त्यस्तो सभा वा जुलुस रोक्न वा भङ्ग गर्न सक्ने व्यवस्था छ । यस दफाले प्रहरीले त्यस्तो सभा रोक्न वा भङ्ग गर्न आवश्यक बलको प्रयोग गर्न सक्ने अधिकार दिएको छ ।

त्यस्तै, ऐनले बलको अनुचित प्रयोग सम्बन्धी विभिन्न गैरकानूनी कार्यलाई अपराधीकरण गरेको छ । कुनै पनि कर्मचारीले ड्युटीमा रहेको वा नरहेको भएता पनि मथिल्लो दर्जाको कर्मचारीको निर्देशनविपरीत अपराधिक बल प्रयोग गरेमा वा गर्ने उद्योग गरेमा वा धम्की दिएमा ऐनको दफा ३३ (ख) मा व्यवस्थित कडा अपराध अन्तर्गत दश वर्षसम्म कैद वा दुई वर्षको तलब बराबरसम्म जरिवाना वा दुबै सजाय हुनसक्ने व्यवस्था छ । त्यस्तै, दफा ३४ ले कुनै कर्मचारीले बलको प्रयोग गरी अपराध गरेमा पाँच वर्षसम्म कैद वा एक वर्षको तलब बराबरसम्म जरिवाना वा दुबै सजाय हुन सक्ने व्यवस्था गरेको छ ।

प्रहरी नियमावली, २०७१

प्रहरी ऐन, २०१२ को दफा ३९ को अधिकार प्रत्यायोजन गरेर नेपाल सरकारले बनाएको प्रहरी नियमावली, २०७१ ले कुनै विशेष सुरक्षाका लागि खटेको प्रहरी कर्मचारीलाई बाधा पुऱ्याए आवश्यकता अनुसार प्रहरीले बल प्रयोग गर्न सक्ने सम्बन्धी व्यवस्था छ । उक्त नियमावली को नियम ६७ को उपनियम १ ले कानून बमोजिम कुनै विशिष्ट व्यक्ति वा महत्त्वपूर्ण संरचना, भवन वा संस्थाको सुरक्षाका लागि प्रहरी खटाउन सकिने प्रावधान छ । उपनियम २ बमोजिम त्यसरी खटिएका प्रहरी कर्मचारीलाई निजको जिम्मेवारी पूरा गर्न नदिने गरी कसैले जोर जुलुम गरे, हतियार उठाई वा नउठाई हमला गरे तोकिएको व्यक्ति वा संरचना वा आफ्नो जीउको सुरक्षाको लागि प्रहरीले आवश्यक बल प्रयोग गर्न सक्छ । त्यस्तै, उपर्युक्त सुरक्षा गर्दा कोही व्यक्ति घाइते वा कसैको मृत्यु भए पनि नेपाल सरकारको स्वीकृतीबिना मुद्दा समेत चलाउन नसक्ने व्यवस्था उपनियम (३) मा छ ।

उपनियम (५) ले यदि खटिएको सुरक्षाकर्मीले आफूसँग रहेको स्रोत साधन वा हातहतियारको प्रयोग बदनियत, हेलचक्याइँसाथ गरेको वा आवश्यकता भन्दा बढी बल प्रयोग गरेको छानविनबाट प्रमाणित हुन आए, निज कर्मचारीलाई विभागीय वा प्रचलित कानूनबमोजिमको कारबाही गर्ने स्पष्ट व्यवस्था छ ।

बलको प्रयोग र मानव अधिकार संरक्षणको सम्बन्ध

मानव अधिकार संरक्षणको प्रश्न बलको प्रयोगसँग गहिरो ढङ्गले जोडिएको छ । बलको प्रयोग अनुचित ढङ्गले गरेको अवस्थामा मानव अधिकारको उल्लङ्घन हुने खतरा रहन्छ । त्यसैले बल प्रयोग गर्दा मानव अधिकारको महत्त्वलाई अनदेखा गर्नु हुँदैन । (श्रेष्ठ, २०७६) बल प्रयोग गर्न सकिने तरिका र हद सधैं व्यक्तिको मौलिक अधिकार र मानव मर्यादासँग सन्तुलनमा हुनुपर्छ । बलको प्रयोगले आधारभूत मानव अधिकार उल्लङ्घन गर्न मिल्दैन । बल र हतियारको प्रयोग गर्नुपूर्व सम्भव भएसम्म आफ्नो ड्युटी निर्वाह गर्दा कानून कार्यान्वयन गर्ने

अधिकारीले अहिंसात्मक माध्यम अपनाउनु पर्छ । अधिकारीले गरेको मानव अधिकारको उल्लङ्घन (Alleged Violence) लाई प्रभावकारी स्वतन्त्र अनुसन्धानको दायरामा ल्याउनु पर्छ । प्रमाणित भएमा जिम्मेवार व्यक्तिलाई जवाफदेही समेत बनाउनु पर्छ ।

कानून कार्यान्वयनमा बलको प्रयोग गर्दा केन्द्रविन्दु र सर्वोच्च प्राथमिकतामा व्यक्तिको बाँच्न पाउने हक हुनुपर्छ । जुनसुकै अवस्था सृजना भएर पनि राज्यले बलको प्रयोग गरेर व्यक्तिको ज्यान लिन मिल्दैन । (ICRC, 2023) कानूनले तोकेको अवस्थाबाहेक अरु कुनै पनि परिस्थितिमा राज्यले व्यक्तिको ज्यान लिन मिल्दैन । मानव अधिकारको विश्वव्यापी घोषणापत्रले धारा ३ मा प्रत्येक व्यक्तिलाई जीवन स्वतन्त्रता र सुरक्षाको अधिकार सुनिश्चित गरेको छ । नागरिक तथा राजनीतिक अधिकार सम्बन्धी अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय प्रतिज्ञापत्र, १९६६ को धारा ६ ले प्रत्येक व्यक्तिलाई मृत्युदण्ड उन्मूलन नगरेको देशमा अपराधको सजायका रूपमा बाहेक स्वेच्छाचारी रूपले कसैको पनि जीवन हरण गर्न नसकिने जीवनको अन्तर्निहित अधिकार प्रदान गरेको छ । साथै; नेपालको संविधानले समेत धारा १६ मा प्रत्येक व्यक्तिलाई सम्मानपूर्वक बाँच्न पाउने हक प्रदान गरेको छ । यी कानूनी दस्तावेजहरूले प्रत्येक व्यक्तिको बाँच्न पाउने हकलाई अहरणीय स्थान दिएको छ । यसकारण पनि कुनै पनि व्यक्तिको जीवन राज्यको स्वेच्छाचारी बलको प्रयोगको विषय हुन सक्दैन । व्यक्तिको जीवन र मर्यादा राज्यले गर्ने बलको प्रयोगको मुटु हो भन्ने आत्मसात् गरेर सुरक्षा अधिकारीहरूले आफ्नो भूमिका निर्वाह गर्नुपर्छ ।

स्वभावतः राज्य व्यक्तिको तुलनामा शक्तिशाली हुन्छ । राज्यले आफ्नो सुरक्षा संयन्त्र प्रयोग गरेर व्यक्तिलाई आफ्नो नियन्त्रणमा लिनसक्नुका साथै यातनासमेत दिन सक्षम हुन्छ । यस परिदृश्यमा व्यक्तिको यातना विरुद्धको हकको जन्म भएको हो । राज्यले बलको प्रयोग गरेर कुनै पनि व्यक्तिलाई कुनै पनि प्रकारको यातना दिनु हुँदैन र दिन मिल्दैन । साथै, राज्यले कुनै वर्ग, जाति, राष्ट्रियता, भाषा, समुदाय वा कुनै पनि त्यस्तो आधारमा बलको प्रयोग गर्नु हुँदैन । बलको प्रयोगबाट घाइते तथा प्रभावित भएका व्यक्तिलाई कानूनी उपचारको हक सुनिश्चित हुन्छ । राज्यले गरेको बलको प्रयोग कानूनबमोजिम छ कि छैन, निश्चित मापदण्ड र सीमाभित्र छ कि छैन इत्यादिको स्वतन्त्र र निष्पक्ष छानबीन भएर पीडितलाई न्याय गरिनु पर्छ । नेपालको संविधानले धारा २० मा स्वतन्त्र न्यायपालिकाबाट न्याय निरूपण र धारा ४६ ले मौलिक हकको प्रचलनका लागि संवैधानिक उपचारको हक प्रदान गरेको छ । राज्यले गरेको बलको प्रयोग कानूनविपरीत भए क्षति पुगेकोमा कानूनी उपचारको अधिकार प्रयोग गरेर न्यायोचित उपचार प्राप्त गर्ने वातावरण हुनुपर्छ । नेपालको सन्दर्भमा प्रहरीले गर्ने बलको प्रयोग सम्बन्धी स्थानीय प्रशासन ऐन, २०२८ लगायत अन्य केही कानूनमा व्यवस्था भए पनि व्यवहारमा अन्तर भएको विभिन्न संस्थाहरूको प्रतिवेदनले समेत पुष्टि गरेको छ । प्रहरीले गर्ने बलको प्रयोग सम्बन्धी स्पष्ट दिशानिर्देशन तथा मापदण्ड तोकेर कानून बनाउनु आवश्यक छ । अन्ततः बलको प्रयोग र मानव अधिकारको सम्बन्ध सन्तुलनमा आधारित हुनुपर्छ । राज्यले बलको प्रयोगबाट नागरिकको अधिकार सुनिश्चित गर्नुपर्छ; उल्लङ्घन गर्नु हुँदैन ।

निष्कर्ष

सारांसमा भन्नुपर्दा राज्यले बल प्रयोग गरेको कारणले नै मानव अधिकार शून्य अवस्थामा पुग्दैन । कानूनले सङ्कटकालीन अवस्था वा अन्य कुनै विषम परिस्थितिमा अधिकार निलम्बन गर्न सकिने भनी स्पष्ट व्यवस्था नगरेको अवस्थासम्म राज्यले बलको प्रयोग गरेर कुनै व्यक्तिको हक अधिकार उल्लङ्घन गरी स्वेच्छाचारी

व्यवहार गर्न हुँदैन/मिल्दैन । राज्यले बलको प्रयोग आवश्यकतालाई मध्यनजर गरी मानव अधिकारको सम्मान, संरक्षण र प्रवर्द्धन गर्ने उद्देश्यले गर्नु पर्छ ।

राज्यले आफूले गर्नुपर्ने कानून कार्यान्वयनका लागि आवश्यकता अनुसार बलको प्रयोग गर्छ । बलको प्रयोग स्वेच्छाचारी ढङ्गको हुनुहुँदैन; कानूनले निर्धारण गरेको सीमा भित्रको हुनुपर्छ । बलको प्रयोग परिस्थितिको आवश्यकता र अपेक्षित जोखिमको अनुपातमा गरिनु पर्छ । राज्यले अनुचित वा अत्यधिक बलको प्रयोग गर्दा मानव अधिकारको उल्लङ्घन मात्र नभएर लोकतान्त्रिक शासनका लागि समेत गम्भीर चुनौती सृजना गर्छ । मानवअधिकारका दृष्टिले बल प्रयोगका हरेक कार्य वैधता, आवश्यकता, आनुपातिकता र उत्तरदायित्वका सिद्धान्तहरूमाथि आधारित हुनुपर्छ ।

सन्दर्भ सामग्री

नेपालको संविधान

मानव अधिकारको विश्वव्यापी घोषणापत्र

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✍ सन्तोष कुमार ढकाल

विषय प्रवेश

नेपालको संवेदनशील भूराजनीतिक अवस्थिति, विशिष्ट भौगोलिक बनावट तथा आन्तरिक परिवेशबाट उत्पन्न हुनसक्ने बहुआयामिक आन्तरिक-बाह्य सुरक्षा चुनौतीहरूको सामना गर्न सैनिक सँगठनको तयारीपन र सामर्थ्यलाई दिव्योपदेश, राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा नीति, राष्ट्रिय प्रतिरक्षा नीति, राष्ट्रिय सैन्य रणनीति, अभियान योजना तथा संस्थागत स्मृति (Institutional Memory) लगायत राष्ट्रका प्रमुख मार्गदर्शक दस्तावेजहरूसँग पूर्णतः एकीकृत गर्दै निरन्तर अभिवृद्धि गर्न आवश्यक हुन्छ। नेपाली सेनाले उक्त रणनीतिक अभिप्राय कार्यान्वयनको प्रमुख साधनको रूपमा उद्देश्य-केन्द्रित सामूहिक तालिमलाई अङ्गीकार गर्नुपर्दछ, जसले सकलदर्जालाई जटिल भू-परिवेश, सीमित स्रोत तथा समय-संवेदनशील परिस्थितिमा एकीकृत र प्रभावकारी रूपमा कार्य सम्पादन गर्न आवश्यक विशिष्ट दक्षता प्रदान गर्दछ। राष्ट्रको सार्वभौमिकता, स्वतन्त्रता र भौगोलिक अखण्डताविरूद्ध उत्पन्न हुनसक्ने परम्परागत, गैर-परम्परागत तथा सैन्य, गैरसैन्य, खुला रूपमा, गोप्य तवरले र बहु आयामिक उपायहरूको एकीकृत प्रयोगबाट सिर्जित वर्णसङ्कर प्रकृतिका खतराहरूको सामना गर्न नेपाली सेनालाई आवश्यक मानसिक, शारीरिक र बौद्धिक तत्परता, कमाण्ड कन्ट्रोल र अन्तर एकाइ समन्वय क्षमता विकास गर्ने प्रभावकारी माध्यम सामूहिक तालिम हो।

विश्वमा सैनिक क्षेत्रतर्फ उन्नत प्रविधि तथा कृत्रिम बौद्धिकताको एकीकरणमार्फत सैनिक क्षमता परिचालन अवधारणामा तीव्र रूपान्तरण भएको स्थितिमा नेपाल जस्ता साना राष्ट्रहरूले व्यहोर्ने पर्ने सुरक्षा खतराहरू समेत विशिष्टीकृत हुँदै गईरहेको कारणले नेपाली सेनालाई समयानुकूल गतिशील, उत्थानशील र अभ्यस्त सँगठनका रूपमा विकास गर्न राज्यले दायित्वबोध गरी जिम्मेवारी निर्वाह गर्नुपर्दछ। अभिभावकको भूमिकामा रहेको राज्यले आफ्ना सम्पूर्ण संस्था र संयन्त्रहरूको उत्तरदायी स्वामित्व ग्रहण गर्नुपर्दछ भने राज्यसँग सम्बद्ध निकायहरूले पनि राज्य हितको लागि समयानुकूल आफूलाई सुधार र प्रगतिका मार्गमा अग्रसर गराउन आवश्यक पहल लिन जरूरी हुन्छ। यस अर्थमा नेपाली सेनामा उपयोग हुने सामूहिक तालिमले सेनामा आबद्ध व्यक्ति वा संस्थाको दक्षता (Efficiency), प्रभावकारिता (Effectiveness) तथा मितव्ययिता (Economy of Force) को मूल्याङ्कन र परीक्षण गर्ने औपचारिक मानकको रूपमा कार्य गर्दछ।

✍ लेखक नेपाली सेनामा ३७ वर्ष सेवा गरेका अवकाशप्राप्त उपरथी हुनुहुन्छ।

नेपाली सेनाले विगतदेखि नै सामूहिक तालिमको विकास र सुदृढीकरणको लागि पर्याप्त समय, स्रोत-साधन तथा जनशक्ति परिचालन गर्दै आएको यथार्थका कारण सामूहिक तालिम कुनै नौलो अवधारणा होइन । तथापि, बाह्य तथा आन्तरिक बदलिँदो सुरक्षा परिवेशसँगै तालिमको स्वरूप र कार्यविधिलाई समयानुकूल परिमार्जन गर्नुपर्ने कार्य अति महत्त्वपूर्ण प्रक्रिया हो । सामूहिक तालिम नेपाली सेनाको परिचालन क्षमता, भू-क्षेत्रअनुकूल युद्धकौशल तथा सङ्कटप्रतिकार्य क्षमताको समग्र मूल्याङ्कन गर्ने निर्णायक परीक्षणका रूपमा स्थापित हुन आवश्यक छ । यसैले सेनाका सबै तह र तप्काले कमजोर इच्छा शक्ति, यथास्थितिमा रहने र सुविधाको घेराबाट बाहिर नजाने प्रवृत्तिहरूलाई त्याग गरी सबै स्तरका तालिमहरूलाई यथार्थपरक, परिणाममुखी र असरदार बनाउन निरन्तर लागि रहनु पर्दछ । यही पृष्ठभूमिमा नेपाली सेनाले गर्ने सामूहिक तालिमलाई समय सापेक्ष र थप परिष्कृत बनाउन सुभाव प्रस्तुत गर्ने उद्देश्यले यस लेखमा सम्बन्धित विविध विषयवस्तुहरूमा आधारित भई छलफल गरिएको छ ।

यस लेखले विशेषतः लेखक विगतमा नेपाली सेनाको ३ नं. वाहिनीको वाहिनीपति, पूर्वी पृतनाको पृतनापति, नेपाली सैनिक प्रतिष्ठान तथा सैनिक कमाण्ड तथा स्टाफ कलेजको कमान्डान्ट र सैनिक तालिम महानिर्देशकको नियुक्तिहरूमा कार्यरत रहँदा प्राप्त गरेको अनुभवमा आधारित रही तत्कालीन पूर्वी कमाण्डको कमाण्ड सेनापतिको नियुक्तिमा रहँदा अन्तर्गतका वाहिनी, गण तथा अनाश्रित गुल्मस्तरमा सञ्चालन भएका सामूहिक तालिम २०७८ लाई केन्द्रमा राखी तिनबाट प्राप्त अनुभव, सिकाइ र चुनौतीहरूको विश्लेषण प्रस्तुत गर्दछ । यस क्रममा उल्लेख गरिएका अनुभव, घटना वा अवधारणाहरूलाई अन्यथा नसोची, संस्थागत सिकाइलाई सुदृढ गर्ने उद्देश्यले गरिएको पेशागत-बौद्धिक विमर्शका रूपमा ग्रहण गरिने अपेक्षा गरिएको छ ।

ऐतिहासिक पृष्ठभूमि

तत्कालीन Greco-Roman सभ्यतामा फौजको रणकौशललाई अभिवृद्धि गर्ने उद्देश्यले लडाइँको ड्रिल र फर्मसनहरूलाई आधार मानी सबै प्रकारका फौजहरूलाई समावेश गरी सामूहिक तालिम सञ्चालन गर्ने गरेको पाइन्छ । सन् १६७६ मा British Standing Army को घोडचडी एवम् पैदल फौजको लागि प्रकाशित "An Abridgment of the Military Discipline" लाई पहिलो औपचारिक Army Manual मान्न सकिन्छ (Fortescue, 1899/1910) । यसैका आधारमा कमाण्डरको आदेशमा फौजहरूको सामूहिक प्रतिक्रिया (Collective Response) को लागि सामूहिक तालिम सञ्चालन गरी Battle Drill हरू को अभ्यास गरिने गरेको थियो । सन् १८९७ मा ब्रिटिस सेनाले Salisbury Plains मा विभिन्न आर्म्सका ठूलो फौज एकत्रित गरी सामूहिक तालिम सञ्चालन गरेको थियो (Leeson, 2008) । हाल सामूहिक तालिम विभिन्न देशका सेनामा तालिमको उद्देश्य र क्षेत्रको आधारमा विभिन्न नामहरूले चिनिन्छ ।

नेपाली सेनामा सामूहिक तालिम

श्री ५ बडामहाराजाधिराज पृथ्वी नारायण शाहबाट थालनी भएको राष्ट्रिय एकीकरण महाअभियानको युद्ध अभ्यास होस् या नेपाल-अङ्ग्रेज युद्धमा भरेली फौजको व्यक्तिगत तथा समूहगत तालिम होस् अथवा नेपाल-भोट युद्ध हुने स्थिति सृजना हुँदा गरेको तालिम होस्, विभिन्न अवस्थामा नेपाली सेनाले सामूहिक तालिम पहिलेदेखि नै गर्ने गरेको पाइन्छ (Hamal, 1995) । श्री ३ रणोद्दीप सिंहको कार्यकालमा सेनाको कवाज र तालिम सम्बन्धी "कवाज किताब" प्रकाशित भएको थियो ।

विदेशी राष्ट्रका सेनाहरूले Combined Arms Live Firing Exercise (CALFX) नाम दिई अभ्यासहरू सञ्चालन गर्ने गरे जस्तो विगतमा नेपाली सेनाले तत्कालीन अवस्थामा उपलब्ध स्रोतहरूको अधिकतम प्रयोग गर्दै त्यस्तै किसिमका अभ्यासहरू विभिन्न चरणमा प्रभावकारी ढंगबाट सञ्चालन गरेको थियो। उदाहरणको लागि विक्रम संवत् २०४० को दशकको शुरुवाती वर्षहरूमा मुस्ताङ्को लेते इलाकामा बाहिनी स्तरको अभ्यास “वास्तविकता” सञ्चालन भएको थियो जसमा विभिन्न स्थानबाट फौजहरू पैदल हर्कत गर्दै अभ्यास इलाकामा एकत्रित भएका थिए भने आर्टिलरी व्याट्रीलाई खच्चड मार्फत त्यस स्थानसम्म पुऱ्याइएको थियो। यसैगरी हवाईजहाजबाट बन्दोबस्तीका सामानहरू खसाल्नुका साथै हवाई तथा जमिनी रेकी गर्दै हतियार ससज्जित हेलिकप्टरहरूबाट हवाई देखभाल गर्ने व्यवस्था गरीएको थियो। उक्त अभ्यासमा आर्टिलरी फायर सहितको संयोजित फायर सपोर्ट प्रदान गर्दै इञ्जिनियर्स तथा सिग्नलको समेत संयुक्त प्रयासमा पोखरा-जोमसोम एक्सिस दुश्मनलाई प्रयोग गर्न नदिने उद्देश्य राखी परम्परागत कथावस्तुमा प्रतिरक्षात्मक लडाइँको अभ्यास सञ्चालन भएको थियो। यसमा Mark Twain को भनाई “History doesn't repeat itself, but it often rhymes” भन्ने कथनलाई स्मरण गर्दा हामीसँग अग्रजहरूले छाडेर गएको सामूहिक तालिमको ऐतिहासिक दस्तावेजहरूको सँगालो प्रशस्त छ जसले असरदार रूपमा तालिम सञ्चालन गर्नको लागि बलियो आधारशिलाको काम गर्छ।

नेपाली सेनाले २०५८ साल अधिसम्म नियमित सामूहिक तालिम सञ्चालन गर्ने गरेकोमा तत्पश्चात देशमा आन्तरिक द्वन्द्व चर्कन गई सेना परिचालन भएको अवस्थामा सामूहिक तालिम सञ्चालन हुन सकेन। वि.सं. २०६३ साल ताका तत्कालीन युद्धरत “माओवादी” समूह शान्ति प्रक्रियामा सहभागी भएपछि युद्धकालिन अवस्थामा अप्रत्याशित वृद्धि भएको नफ्रि सहित सेना व्यारेक फर्किएको अवस्थामा आफ्नो फौजको पेशागत क्षमताको अभिवृद्धिको लागि नेपाली सेनाले सामूहिक तालिमको चरम आवश्यकता महसुस गरेको थियो। तर उक्त समयमा नेपाली सेना सैनिक-नागरिक तनावबाट उब्जिएको भुमरीमा अल्भिन्न पुगेकोले तत्कालै सामूहिक तालिम सञ्चालन गर्न असमर्थ रह्यो। मिति २०६८ सालदेखि पुनः सामूहिक तालिम सुचारू भई वि.सं. २०७२ र २०७३ सालमा महाभुकम्पको कारण सामूहिक तालिम पुनः अवरूद्ध हुन पुगेको थियो। वि.सं. २०७४ सालदेखि सुचारू भएको तालिम कोभिड महामारीको कारणले वि.सं. २०७७ मा रोकिन गई वि.सं. २०७८ सालदेखि नयाँ अभियान र अभूतपूर्व फौजहरूको सहभागिता सहित पुनः शुरू भएको थियो।

सामूहिक तालिम २०७८

नेपाली सेनाका प्राथमिकताहरू लाई आधार मान्दै दुई वर्ष भित्रमा नेपाली सेनाका सकल दर्जालाई सामूहिक तालिममा सहभागी गराउने तत्कालीन नीति अनुसार पहिलो वर्ष २०७८ मा तत्कालीन कमाण्ड अन्तर्गतका सम्पूर्ण आर्म्सको ५० प्रतिशत फौजलाई सहभागी गराई विभिन्न रणनीतिक दस्तावेज तथा योजनाहरूसँग एकाकार हुने गरी व्यक्तिगत र सामूहिक गरी २ चरणलाई अफ Non-Tactical र Tactical तहमा वर्गीकरण गर्दै विभिन्न अभ्यासहरू सञ्चालन गरिएको थियो। सम्पूर्ण आर्म्स तथा सेवाको सहकार्य सहित सञ्चालन गरिएको सो वर्षको सामूहिक तालिमले अधिकृतहरूमा रेजिमेन्टेसनको भावना, पदिक तथा बिल्लादारहरूको सशक्तीकरण, युनिट तथा सब-युनिटहरूको आपसी मेलमिलाप तथा सहयोगीपन अभिवृद्धि गर्नुको साथै समग्रमा नेपाली सेनाको अपरेसनल क्षमता बढाउन अतुलनीय योगदान दिएको अनुभूति गरिएको थियो।

पेशागत दक्षता अभिवृद्धिमा सामूहिक तालिमको योगदान

परीक्षणको सुअवसर:

नेपाली सेनाको योजना प्रक्रियाहरूको अवधारणात्मक पक्षलाई व्यावहारिक रूपमा कार्यान्वयन गरी उक्त प्रक्रिया र उपलब्ध योजनाको परीक्षण तथा प्रमाणीकरण गर्न सामूहिक तालिमलाई उपयुक्त अवसरको रूपमा लिन सकिन्छ। यस्तैगरी युद्धकार्य विभाग, प्रबन्धरथी विभाग, सम्भाररथी विभाग, इण्टेलिजेन्स कोर, युद्ध मद्दती तथा युद्ध सेवा मद्दती फौज विभाग र अन्य विभागहरूको व्यवसायिक आवश्यकताको साथै शोध तथा विकास महानिर्देशनालयले विकास गरेको अवधारणाहरूको समेत परीक्षण गर्नको लागि योजना तयार गर्नु अत्यन्तै जरूरी रहेको छ।

अवधारणात्मक एकता:

पेशागत ज्ञानको अवधारणात्मक बुझाइ तथा सिपको विविधतालाई एकीकृत गरी युद्धकला तथा लड्ने ढाँचामा समान बुझाइ तथा कार्यगत एकता ल्याउन समेत सामूहिक तालिम उत्कृष्ट मञ्च रहेको छ।

युद्धकलालाई परिष्कृत गर्ने अवसर:

पहाडी देशका सेना पहाडी युद्धकलामा पारंगत भई उक्त स्थानका अलौकिक विशेषता र चुनौतीहरूलाई अवसरको रूपमा परिणत गर्ने सैनिक ज्ञान र सीपमा निपुण हुनै पर्दछ। आम रूपमा समथर भू-भागमा अपनाइने युद्धकलालाई हुबहु पहाडी इलाकामा अपनाउँदा स्थिति प्रत्युत्पादक हुन सक्दछ। यसैले सामूहिक तालिममार्फत पहाडी युद्धकला निरन्तर परिष्कृत गर्दै लैजानु आवश्यक हुन्छ। यस प्रक्रियाबाट उच्च शिखर, पहाडी तथा समथर भू-भागमा विद्यमान भौगोलिक र जमिनी अवस्थाअनुसार अपनाउनुपर्ने युद्धकला, रणकौशल तथा कार्यविधिहरूलाई समयानुकूल समायोजन र परिमार्जन गर्न सकिन्छ। विगतका सामूहिक तालिमहरूबाट सिक्िएको पाठमा पहाडी इलाकामा उपयुक्त स्थानमा असरदार तवरले साना नफ्रीका फौजहरू तैनाथ गर्न व्यावहारिक र सान्दर्भिक देखिन गएको छ। महत्त्वपूर्ण स्थानहरूमा बलियो एवं अति चलायमान प्रकृतिका पत्ती नफ्रीको Protective Patrol हरू लाई प्रभावकारी ढंगले परिचालन गरी शत्रुलाई असरदार ढंगले क्षयीकरण गर्न सकिन्छ। विगतमा सञ्चालन गरिएको अभ्यास “पाथिभरा” को दौरान देवीबक्स गुल्मको एक सेनामुख (Platoon) फौजले हेलियोग्राफ माध्यमबाट मिलाप कायम गर्दै पहाडी इलाकामा करिब ५ कि.मी. सम्मको मोर्चालाई असरदार तवरले cover गरेको उदाहरण हामीसामु विद्यमान छ।

Planning Data Update:

जनशक्ति तथा स्रोत-साधनसँग सम्बन्धित योजनाका तथ्याङ्क (Planning Data) हरू अद्यावधिक तथा परिष्कृत गरी क्रमिक रूपमा परिमार्जन गर्न सामूहिक तालिम एक उपयुक्त अवसर हो। तत्कालीन पूर्वी कमाण्डले अन्तर्गत सञ्चालन भएको सामूहिक तालिम २०७८ को अवसरमा सैनिक परिचालनको अवस्थामा नेपालको

विशिष्ट जमिन र परिस्थिति अनुसार दैनिक आवश्यकताहरू जस्तै पानी, पाल, डिफेन्स स्टोर आदि पत्ती, सेनामुख र गुल्मलाई के-कति परिमाणमा आवश्यक पर्छ भन्ने तथ्याङ्क अद्यावधिक गरी सुभाषका लागि जंगी अड्डामा पत्राचार गरेको थियो ।

दरबन्दी अनुसार तालिम:

हाम्रो तैनाथी तथा विभिन्न जिम्मेवारीहरू ले गर्दा साधारणतया युनिट हेडक्वाटर मा तैनाथ कुल संख्याको २० देखि २५ प्रतिशत फौज मात्र उपलब्ध रहने गरेकोमा सामूहिक तालिम २०७८ को दौरान सो नफ्रीको ८० देखि ९० प्रतिशतसम्म फौज एकत्रित भएको हुँदा यसबाट दरबन्दी अनुसार गुल्म, से. मु. तथा पत्तीमा तालिम गराउने अवसर प्राप्त भएको थियो ।

पदिक तथा बिल्लादारहरू को सबलीकरण:

“युनिट तथा सब युनिटको आधार स्तम्भ भनेको पत्ती हो र पत्ती पतिको नेतृत्व तथा कार्यक्षमताले समग्र युनिट तथा सब युनिटको पत्तीलाई प्रतिबिम्बित गर्दछ” । यसै सन्दर्भमा सामूहिक तालिम २०७८ पूर्व, उच्च प्राथमिकताका साथ अभियानको रूपमा तत्कालीन पूर्वी कमाण्ड अन्तर्गतका युनिटहरूबाट करिब ५०० को संख्यामा सञ्चालन गरिएका पदिक तथा बिल्लादारहरू को योजना र नेतृत्वमा ५ देखि ७ दिने independent कारवाहीको सकारात्मक प्रभाव सामूहिक तालिम र स्थानीय तह निर्वाचन २०७९ मा देखियो । यसै सन्दर्भमा उदयपुर जिल्लामा तैनाथ श्री पशुपति प्रसाद गणको जिम्मेवारी इलाकामा स्थानीय तहको निर्वाचनको दिन घटेको घटनालाई प्रस्तुत गर्न उपयुक्त हुन्छ । कटारीस्थित जनता कालिका माध्यमिक विद्यालयमा मतदानको दौरान उत्पन्न विवादमा प्रहरीको गोलीबाट एक जनाको मृत्यु हुदाँ अस्थायी वेसबाट एक अमलदारको नेतृत्वमा रहेको ५ जनाको टोली तुरुन्तै घटना स्थलमा पुगी सुझबुझपूर्ण तवरले उत्तेजित भिडलाई संयमित बनाउँदै मतदान स्थल तथा मतपटिकाको सुरक्षाको साथै थप जनधनको क्षति हुनबाट जोगाउन सफल भएको थियो । यस्ता सकारात्मक प्रभावको साना-ठूला अनुकरणीय उदाहरणहरू नेपाली सेनामा प्रशस्त रहेका छन् जसलाई उचित तवरले भविष्यमा अध्ययनको लागि संग्रहित गर्न जरूरी देखिएको छ ।

सामूहिक तालिम २०७८ का केहि ठम्याइँहरू (Findings)

उक्त सामूहिक तालिमका मुख्य Finding हरू निम्नानुसार रहेका छन्:

घाइते बिरामी पछाडि हटाउने: सामूहिक तालिम २०७८ मा पहाडी स्थानहरूमा युद्धको सम्भावित परिस्थितिलाई मनन गरी घाइते बिरामी पछाडि हटाउने तर्तिवको अभ्यास गर्दा एक जवानलाई पछाडि हटाउनको लागि न्यूनतम ९-१० जना व्यक्तिहरू आवश्यक पर्ने देखिएकोले मानव स्रोत तथा घोडा खच्चडको आवश्यकताको औचित्यता पुष्टि भएको थियो ।

अधिकृतको उपलब्धता: फर्मेशन तथा युनिटहरूमा स्टाफ अधिकृतहरूको कमी हुनुको साथै उपलब्ध अधिकृतहरूसमेत विभिन्न थप जिम्मेवारीहरूले अति-प्रतिबद्ध भई लागु गर्न खोजिएको स्टाफ प्रणालीहरूमा

व्यावहारिक रूपले कठिनाइ उत्पन्न भएको थियो । तसर्थ, हाम्रो परिप्रेक्ष्यमा यी योजना प्रक्रियाहरूलाई अद्यावधिक गर्दै घनीभूत रूपमा परीक्षण गरी व्यावहारिक रूपबाट सम्मत भएको एकिन भइसकेपछि मात्र लागु गर्न उपयुक्त हुन्छ ।

तालिम इलाका: केही युनिट तथा सब युनिटहरूको जिम्मेवारी क्षेत्रमा उपयुक्त तालिम इलाकाको अनुपलब्धताले तालिम तथा अभ्यास सञ्चालनमा प्रत्यक्ष असर परेको र त्यसको तयारीमा धेरै स्रोतको प्रयोग गर्नु पर्ने बाध्यता रहेको थियो । तसर्थ, नेपाल सरकारले नेपाली सेनालाई विभिन्न स्थानमा पर्याप्त मात्रामा तालिम क्षेत्र उपलब्ध गराएमा, एकातर्फ यसले सेनाको मद्दतमा वातावरण संरक्षणमा सहयोग पुग्न सक्छ भने अर्कोतर्फ सेनाको तालिम गुणस्तरमा सकारात्मक प्रभाव पर्छ । यस्ता क्षेत्रहरूलाई अन्य सुरक्षा तथा स्थानीय निकायले आवश्यकता अनुसार प्रयोग गर्न सकिने गरी निर्माण गरिँदा सहकार्य र सामूहिकतामा टेवा पुग्छ ।

बजेट: उपलब्ध सीमित बजेटबाट तालिम सञ्चालन गर्नुपर्दा आशानुरूपको स्तर हासिल गर्दै उद्देश्य प्राप्त गर्नको लागि चुनौती महसुस गरिएको थियो ।

बन्दोवस्ती कार्य जनशक्ति: आफ्नो कार्यमा अभ्यस्त एक बन्दोवस्ती कार्य सिपाहीले एक दिनमा गर्ने बन्दोवस्ती सम्बन्धी कार्यलाई पाँच जना जवानहरूले मात्र सोही अवधिमा सोही कार्य गर्न सक्ने देखिएकोले युनिट तथा सब युनिटहरूमा अन्य दर्जालाई बन्दोवस्ती कार्यमा खटाउदा अधिक संख्यामा खटाउनु पर्ने हुँदा मुख्य काममा Bayonet Strength को कमी हुन गएको थियो ।

शारीरिक तन्दुरुस्ती: “देशको भूगोल पैतालाले नै नाप्नु पर्ने” कथन र आवश्यकतालाई मनन गर्दा हाम्रा फौजहरू देशका सबै इलाकामा काम गर्न सक्षम हुनु पर्दछ । तराईमा तालिम प्राप्त गरेका फौजको शारीरिक सहिष्णुतालाई पहाडी इलाकामा कार्यरत रहँदा अभ्र अभिवृद्धि गर्नुपर्ने आवश्यकता देखिएको थियो । समग्रमा भन्नु पर्दा नेपाली सेनाका फौजहरू हिमाल, पहाड तथा तराई सबै प्रकारका भू-परिवेशमा तैनाथ भई प्रभावकारी रूपमा कार्य गर्न सक्षम हुनैपर्दछ । यस सन्दर्भमा सैनिक यथार्थलाई स्पष्ट रूपमा उजागर गर्ने T. R. Fehrenbach को भनाइ अत्यन्त सान्दर्भिक देखिन्छ "You may fly over a land forever" you may bomb it, atomize it, and wipe it clean of life – but if you desire to defend it, protect it, and keep it for civilization, you must do this on the ground, the way the Roman Legions did – by putting your soldiers in the mud." उक्त भनाइले भू-क्षेत्रमा आधारित सैनिक उपस्थितिको अपरिहार्यतालाई रेखाङ्कित गर्दै नेपाली सेनाको परिचालन यथार्थसँग प्रत्यक्ष रूपमा मेल खान्छ ।

विभिन्न नफ्रीको तुलनात्मक अध्ययन: सामूहिक तालिमको समयमा ९ जना, १० जना र १३ जनाको पत्ती एवम् १०६ जना तथा १३८ जनाको गुल्मलाई विविध मापदण्डहरूको आधारमा तुलनात्मक अध्ययन गर्दा पहाडी इलाकामा १३ नफ्रीको पत्ती तथा १३८ नफ्रीको गुल्मलाई आक्रमण र प्रतिरक्षा, दुवै अवस्थामा, प्रयोग गर्न तुलनात्मक रूपमा बढी सहज हुने पाइएको थियो । सामूहिक तालिम २०७८ को अवसरमा १३ जना नफ्रीको पत्तीमा विशेष निशानेबाज एवम् Rocket Launcher अथवा 2 Inch Mortar समावेश गरी उक्त पत्तीलाई आवश्यकता अनुसार कुनै विशेष मिशनको लागि अनाश्रित तवरमा खटाउन सकिने सम्भावना समेत व्यावहारिक परीक्षणबाट पहिल्याइएको थियो ।

Improvisation र सर्वोत्कृष्ट अभ्यास: सामूहिक तालिममा तत्कालीन पूर्वी कमाण्ड अन्तर्गतका फौजहरूले आवश्यकताको आधारमा अन्तर्ज्ञान, कल्पना र सृजनशीलताको अनुपम उदाहरण दिई विविध पक्षहरूमा Improvisation को नमुनाहरू प्रस्तुत गरेका थिए जसलाई सर्वोत्कृष्ट अभ्यासको रूपमा अन्तर्गतका सबै युनिट, सब-युनिटहरूलाई जानकारी गराईएको थियो । यस्ता संस्कारलाई अभै व्यवस्थित गर्न आवश्यक छ ।

राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा सुदृढीकरणका लागि सामूहिक तालिम

आधुनिक परिवेशमा सुरक्षा विज्ञ Barry Buzan द्वारा विकसित गरिएको Comprehensive Security अवधारणाले सुरक्षा अध्ययनको परम्परागत सैन्य केन्द्रित दृष्टिकोणलाई पुनः परिभाषित गर्दै राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षालाई केवल सैन्य परिधिमा सीमित नराखी यससँग आर्थिक स्थायित्व, सामाजिक एकता, राजनीतिक वैधता, सुशासन, वातावरणीय आयामहरू तथा मानव सुरक्षाका विविध पक्षहरू अन्तरसम्बद्ध रहेको तथ्यलाई स्थापित गरिदिएको छ । नेपालजस्तो भूराजनीतिक रूपमा संवेदनशील, बहुसांस्कृतिक र बहुभाषिक समाज भएको राष्ट्रमा राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको यो बृहत स्वरूप अभूत महत्त्वपूर्ण देखिन्छ । यसकारण राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाका उल्लिखित समग्र पक्षहरूको निरन्तर मूल्याङ्कन, विश्लेषण तथा पूर्वानुमान गर्नु अत्यन्त आवश्यक हुन्छ । यस्तो विश्लेषणात्मक कार्य मुख्यतः सैनिक बुद्धिमत्ता (Military Intelligence) को दायरा भित्र पर्दछ, जसले प्राप्त सूचनाको विश्लेषणका आधारमा सरकारलाई सुसूचित निर्णय गर्न सहयोग पुऱ्याउँछ ।

यस्तो जटिल सुरक्षा परिवेशमा नेपाली जनताले समेत नेपाली सेनाको बहुआयामिक भूमिकाको अपेक्षा गरेको हुन्छ । यसै अपेक्षा अनुरूप विगतमा विविध सङ्कटका घडीमा नेपाली सेनाले राष्ट्रको स्थायित्व जोगाउन निर्वाह गरेको महत्त्वपूर्ण भूमिकाका उदाहरणहरू प्रशस्त पाइन्छ । हालसालै देशले अनुभव गरेको “Gen-Z आन्दोलन” को क्रममा देखापरेका सुरक्षा व्यवस्थाका कमजोर पक्षहरू वा भविष्यमा यस्तै प्रकृतिका अन्य सङ्कटहरूले निम्त्याउन सक्ने नेतृत्व रिक्तताका अवस्थाहरूलाई मनन गर्दा जटिल परिस्थितिमा राज्यका विभिन्न निकायहरू निष्क्रिय बन्न पुगेको अवस्थामा समेत राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा र स्थायित्व कायम राख्न पहल गर्ने जिम्मेवारी अन्ततः सेनामाथि आउन सक्छ भन्ने मान्यता स्पष्ट रूपमा देखिएको छ । यस्तो अवस्थामा राष्ट्रिय तथा अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय वैधतालाई ध्यानमा राख्दै सेनाले आवश्यक परे समन्वय, मध्यस्थता तथा परिस्थिति नियन्त्रणका लागि सक्रिय भूमिका निर्वाह गर्न सक्षम हुनैपर्छ । विषम परिस्थितिहरूमा अनिर्णयको अवस्थाबाट बाहिर निस्केर समयानुकूल तथा परिणाममुखी निर्णय तुरुन्तै कार्यान्वयन गर्ने क्षमता विकास गर्नु अत्यन्त आवश्यक हुन्छ । यसको लागि सम्भावित सङ्कटापन्न परिस्थितिहरूको पूर्वानुमान गर्दै सर्वपक्षीय सहभागितामा सञ्चालन गरिने टेबल-टप एक्सरसाइज (TTX), कमाण्ड पोस्ट एक्सरसाइज (CPX) तथा फिल्ड एक्सरसाइज (FTX) जस्ता सामूहिक अभ्यासहरू मार्फत विभिन्न सरकारी, गैर सरकारी तथा नागरिक निकायहरूसँगको समन्वय, निर्णय प्रक्रियाको अभ्यास, स्रोत-साधनको समुचित परिचालन तथा सङ्कट व्यवस्थापनका कार्यविधिहरूको यथार्थपरक परीक्षण सम्भव हुन्छ । यस्ता अभ्यासहरूले प्रभावकारी साभेदारी, विज्ञहरूको अग्रिम पहिचान, विविध विकल्पहरूको विकास, स्रोत व्यवस्थापनको पूर्वतयारी, परिस्थिति अनुकूल द्रुत प्रतिक्रिया क्षमताको विकास तथा आम जनसमुदायको मनोविज्ञान विश्लेषण गर्न समेत सहयोग पुऱ्याउँछ । परिणामस्वरूप सङ्कटको समयमा राज्य संयन्त्रलाई सक्रिय बनाउने, सार्वजनिक विश्वास कायम राख्ने तथा राष्ट्रको आन्तरिक र बाह्य वैधता सुरक्षित राख्ने दिशामा प्रभावकारी कदम चाल्न सहज हुन्छ ।

भूराजनीतिक कारणबाट भविष्यमा कसैले हामी विरुद्ध लक्षित न्यून तहको छद्म क्रियाकलाप, हाम्रो अस्तित्वको सुरक्षाका लागि खतरा हुनसक्छ, कसैको सीमित क्रियाकलाप हाम्रो लागि समग्र युद्धको परिस्थिति हुन सक्दछ। यस परिस्थितिको सामना गर्न "Whole of Nations Approach" लाई "Whole of Community Approach" मा रूपान्तरण गर्न अपरिहार्य छ। राष्ट्रिय सङ्घटको समयमा सेना र स्थानीय समुदाय काँधमा काँध मिलाएर अघि बढ्न तयार हुनेगरी समुदायसँगको सामाजिक करार (Social Contract) कायम राख्ने वातावरण तयार गर्नु पर्दछ। निरन्तर सहकार्य, सचेतना र अभ्यासबाट नै यस अवस्थाको सृजना गर्न सकिन्छ। नेपाली सेनाले सामूहिक तालिम तथा विविध प्रकारका अभ्यासहरूको माध्यमबाट माथि उल्लिखित दृष्टिकोणहरूको व्यावहारिकता र प्रभावकारिताको परीक्षण गर्नु एक बुद्धिमत्तापूर्ण तथा राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको दृष्टिकोणले दूरदर्शी कार्य मानिन्छ।

राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा अन्तर्गत नेपाली सेनाको मुख्य जिम्मेवारी देशको सार्वभौमिकता र भौगोलिक अखण्डताको सुरक्षा गर्नु भएकोले अविलम्ब नेपाली सेनाले देशका रणनीतिक क्षेत्रहरूको पहिचान, संरक्षण र प्रभावकारी उपयोगमा ध्यान दिनु अति आवश्यक छ। तत्कालीन पूर्वी कमाण्ड अन्तर्गतका फौजहरूले मध्य पहाडी इलाकाको सामरिक महत्त्वका स्थानहरू पहिचान गरी सो स्थानहरूमा सामूहिक तालिम सञ्चालन गर्न प्राथमिकता दिएका थिए। राजमार्ग वरपरका महत्त्वपूर्ण इलाकाहरू पहिचान गर्ने, तालिमको लागि जग्गा प्राप्त, आवश्यक भौतिक पूर्वाधारहरूको विकास, स्रोतहरूको पूर्वस्थापना गरी भण्डारण गर्ने जस्ता अभ्यासहरूलाई प्राथमिकताका साथ अघि बढाउन पर्ने देखिन्छ। अभ्र इलाका वरपर जग्गा प्राप्त गरेर सैनिक वस्तीहरू स्थापना गरी क्यान्टोनमेन्टको रूपमा विकास गर्नुपर्ने दूरगामी सोच अहिले नै राख्नु पर्दछ। साथै, हुलाकी राजमार्ग तथा चुरेक्षेत्रको रणनीतिक महत्त्वलाई समेत भविष्यमा आफू अनुकूल प्रयोग गर्दै सो इलाकामा समेत सामूहिक तालिम सञ्चालन गर्नुपर्ने देखिन्छ।

लेखक तत्कालीन पूर्वी कमाण्डका कमाण्ड सेनापति रहँदा, खाँदबारीको तुम्लिङटारमा satellite logistic base स्थापना गर्ने प्रस्ताव जंगी अड्डामा पेश गरिएकोमा विभिन्न कारणवश उक्त कार्य सम्पन्न हुन सकेन। सो क्षेत्र आवागमनका दृष्टिले समेत सुगम र पूर्वी क्षेत्रको केन्द्रमा अवस्थित हुनको साथै बाह्रै महिना सफा मौसमको कारणले उक्त स्थानस्थित विमानस्थलमा हवाई जहाजको उडान-अवतरण सहज हुने विशेषताका कारण तुम्लिङटारमा logistic base स्थापनाका लागि अत्यन्त उपयुक्त स्थान रहेको ठहर गर्न सकिन्छ। नेपाल सरकारको सक्रिय पहलमा नेपाली सेनाले Operations logistics जगदक निर्माण गर्दा, देशका अन्य सुरक्षा तथा सम्बन्धित निकायहरूले समेत अधिकतम प्रयोग गर्न सक्ने किसिमले स्थान चयन गर्दा, राज्यबाट खर्च गरिएको स्रोतबाट अधिकतम लाभ हासिल गर्न सकिन्छ।

सुभावाहरू

सामूहिक तालिमको स्तर अभिवृद्धिका लागि निम्नानुसारका सुभावाहरू प्रस्तुत गरिन्छ:

आर्थिक व्यवस्थापन: तालिम नै फौजको सबैभन्दा ठूलो "कल्याण" भएकाले युनिटहरूको फण्डको केही प्रतिशत रकम सन्तुलित वेल्फेयरको रूपमा "सामूहिक तालिम खुत्रुके" नामकरण गरी जम्मा गर्न सकिन्छ।

दरबन्दीको मद्दती फौज: दरबन्दी अनुसारको सांगठनिक स्वरूप कायम राख्न युनिट तथा सब-युनिटहरूको मद्दती सेनामुखमा ट्रेड विशेषका तालिम प्राप्त सकलदर्जाको संख्यात्मक वृद्धि गर्नको लागि तत्कालीन पूर्वी कमाण्ड अन्तर्गतका युनिट, सब-युनिटहरूलाई निर्देशन दिइएको थियो। सपयुक्त जनशक्ति रातारात उत्पादन गरी परिचालन गर्न असम्भव प्रायः नै हुने भएकोले, राइफल गुल्मको दरबन्दीबाट जनशक्ति खिचेर भए पनि, मद्दती सेनामुखको दरबन्दी पूरा गरी युनिट तहमा ट्रेड विशेषको तालिम गराई सामूहिक तालिममा उनीहरूको विषयगत ज्ञान र सपलाई निखार ल्याउन आवश्यक छ।

अभिलेख प्रणाली: "Train all Spare none" को मान्यता अनुसार तत्कालीन पूर्वी कमाण्ड हेडक्वाटरले तालिममा सबैको सहभागिता सुनिश्चित गर्न फर्मेशन तथा युनिटहरूले प्रत्येक व्यक्तिको सामूहिक तालिममा सहभागिताको अभिलेख दुरुस्त राखी सरूवा भएका सम्पूर्ण आर्म्स तथा सेवाको अधिकृत, पदिक एवम् अन्यदर्जाको उक्त विवरण सम्बन्धित निकायमा पठाउने व्यवस्था सुरू गर्दै यस सम्बन्धमा नेपाली सेनामा नीतिगत व्यवस्था नै हुनुपर्ने राय जङ्गी अड्डामा पठाएको थियो। यसैगरी पदिक तथा अन्यदर्जाहरूलाई पदोन्नति तथा शान्ति सेना लगायतका अवसरहरू प्राप्त गर्नका लागि निश्चित सेवा अवधिभित्र निश्चित संख्यामा सामूहिक तालिममा सहभागी हुनुपर्ने तथा अधिकृतको हकमा सह सेनानी दर्जा सम्ममा न्यूनतम ३ पटक र सेनानी दर्जामा न्यूनतम २ पटक सामूहिक तालिममा अनिवार्य सहभागी हुनुपर्ने गरी नीतिगत व्यवस्था गरिएमा युनिटगत सौहार्दमा टेवा पुगुगई व्यावसायिकता बढ्ने विषयमा समेत सुझाव प्रस्तुत गरिएको थियो। यसैगरी खेलाडी, प्राविधिक लगायत अन्य ट्रेड विशेषका सकलदर्जाले सामूहिक तालिममा सहभागी हुनुपर्ने/नपर्ने सो सम्बन्धमा पनि नेपाली सेनामा नीतिगत व्यवस्था गरिएमा उपयुक्त हुने देखिन्छ।

तालिम इलाकाको भ्रमण: सामूहिक तालिम २०७८ मा सामूहिक तालिममा संलग्न नभएका अन्तर्गतका बाहिनी, गण तथा गुल्मका पतिहरूलाई सामूहिक तालिम इलाका र गतिविधिहरूको अवलोकन गराउने व्यवस्था मिलाइएको थियो। यसले भविष्यमा सञ्चालन गरिने तालिममा एकरूपता आउनुको साथै प्रतिस्पर्धात्मक भावना सृजना हुन सक्दछ। यसका साथै अन्य सुरक्षा निकाय, राष्ट्रिय सेवा दल, स्थानीय प्रतिनिधि, पदाधिकारी र सर्वसाधारणलाई समेत अवलोकन गराउँदा नेपाली सेनाको छवि तथा व्यावसायिकता थप उजागर हुने देखिन्छ।

व्यक्तिगत तालिम: व्यक्तिगत चरणको तालिमहरूलाई युनिट निरन्तरता तालिममा समावेश गरी उक्त अवधिलाई समूहमा गरिने तालिमको लागि उपयोग गर्न सकिन्छ। तत्कालीन पूर्वी कमाण्ड अन्तर्गतका फौजहरूले व्यक्तिगत तालिमलाई सामूहिक तालिम सुरू हुनुपूर्व युनिटमा नै शान्ति सेनाको पूर्व तैनाथी तालिम जस्तै Lane Training को रूपमा सञ्चालन गरेका थिए।

संस्थागत स्मृति: तत्कालीन पूर्वी कमाण्डमा सञ्चालन गरिएको सामूहिक तालिमको सञ्चालन विधि, तालिम इलाकाको रूपरेखा, बन्दोबस्ती पक्ष, तालिमका सबल तथा सुधारु पर्ने पक्षहरूको बारेमा नयाँ नियुक्ति भई आउने पति एवम् स्थानान्तरण भई आउने नयाँ युनिटलाई तालिम इलाकाको नक्सासहित विस्तृत बुझ-बुझारथ गराउनुको साथै सम्बन्धित बाहिनी अड्डाले त्यसलाई संग्रहित गरी संस्थागत स्मृतिहरू हस्तान्तरण गर्ने व्यवस्था गरिएको थियो। यसका साथै उक्त अभ्यास इलाकाको पृथकता अनुसार अन्य समयमा समेत त्यस्ता जमिनसँग सम्बन्धित

कक्षाहरू सञ्चालन गर्दा सो इलाकाको सन्दर्भ दिई ज्ञान प्रदान गर्दा बुझाइमा सहजता भएको महसुस गरिएको थियो । सामूहिक तालिम २०७८ को अवसरमा पहिल्याइएको Defense based on Salient को उदाहरणको लागि सप्तरीको अभ्यास इलाका, समथर जमिन, पहाड तथा Salient को निकटता भएको स्थानको लागि सिरहा, प्राकृतिक अवरोधमा आधारित रहेको प्रतिरक्षाको लागि भोजपुरको टूवाङ्ग-टूवाङ्गे डाँडा तथा बखतरबन्द-यान्त्रिकीकृत फौज र हवाई अवतरण प्रतिरोधी एकाइहरूको तैनाथी तथा अभ्यासको लागि उदयपुरको लाहुरेखौँचको सन्दर्भ तथा उदाहरण दिदै छलफल गराउँदा बुझाइमा सहज हुने देखिन्छ ।

जिम्मवारी इलाकाहरू Overlap हुने गरी बाह्य अभ्यास: विगतको द्वन्द्वबाट सिकेको पाठहरूबाट सिक्दै सामूहिक तालिमको बाह्य अभ्यासलाई तत्कालीन कमाण्ड तथा वाहिनीको अपरेसन योजनासँग सामञ्जस्य हुनेगरी जिम्मेवारी इलाका परस्पर Overlap हुने गरी सञ्चालन गरिएकोले इलाका परिचय तथा युनिटहरूबिच आपसी समन्वयमा अभिवृद्धि भएको थियो ।

दुई पक्ष सहभागी अभ्यास: तालिमलाई रोचक र वास्तविकतामा आधारित बनाउन, दुश्मनको युद्धकलाको बुझाइ र आफ्नो युद्धकलालाई परिष्कृत गर्नको लागि तत्कालीन पूर्वी कमाण्ड अन्तर्गतका फौजले तालिमहरूमा दुई पक्ष सहभागी गराई अभ्यास सञ्चालन गरेको थियो । दुई पक्ष सहभागी अभ्यास नेपाली सेनाका सबै तहहरूमा हुने व्यवस्था गर्न आवश्यक देखिन्छ ।

Disperse to concentrate and disengage to engage: विगतदेखि नै लेखकले Disperse to concentrate and disengage to engage को अवधारणाअनुसार जनशक्ति तथा स्रोत-साधनको परिचालन गर्नुपर्ने सुझाव प्रस्तुत गर्दै आइरहेको सन्दर्भमा हाल ड्रोन प्रविधिको विकाससँगै व्यापक मात्रामा ड्रोन हमलाको खतरा माफ्र परिचालित हुनुपर्ने सम्भावित परिस्थितिले यस कथनको सार्थकतालाई सत्य साबित गरेको छ । नेपाली सेनाले सामूहिक तालिमको बाहिरी अभ्यास तथा पृतनास्तरका अभ्यासहरूमा यस अवधारणाअनुसार जनशक्ति तथा स्रोत-साधनको परिचालन गर्नुपर्ने आवश्यकता देखिन्छ ।

अधिकृत कमीको पूर्ति : सामूहिक तालिम सञ्चालन गर्ने क्रममा, युनिटहरूमा अधिकृतको कमीलाई मध्यनजर गर्दै, बाहिनी अड्डा तथा तत्कालीन कमाण्ड हेडक्वाटरमा न्यूनतम संख्याका अधिकृतहरूले मात्र बहु-जिम्मेवारी वहन गर्ने व्यवस्था गरी, बाँकी अधिकृतहरूलाई प्राथमिकताका साथ सामूहिक तालिममा खटाइएको थियो । निश्चित समयका लागि जङ्गी अड्डा तथा फर्मेशनहरूमा रहेको स्टाफ सेललाई कटौती गरी (Staff echelon's clubbing) युनिटहरूमा अधिकृत उपलब्ध गराउने प्रावधानलाई निरन्तरता दिदै एउटै स्थानमा भएका फर्मेशन, युनिट तथा सब युनिटहरूमा एउटै स्टाफ सेलबाट कार्यसम्पादन गराउँदा अधिकृतको कमी केही हदसम्म पूर्ति हुने देखिन्छ । करिब ३ वर्षे लामो अधिकृत क्याडेट तालिम र तत्पश्चात्का तत्पश्चात्का अन्य व्यक्तिगत पेशागत तालिमहरूले गर्दा अधिकृतहरू अति-प्रतिबद्ध (Over committed) हुने गरेकाले उनीहरूले गर्ने Regimental Duties लाई प्रत्यक्ष असर गरेको छ । तसर्थ अधिकृतहरूलाई यस तालिम मार्फत आफ्नो युनिटको Regimental Duties मा समेत उत्तरदायी बनाउँदै स्वेच्छाले सहभागी हुने वातावरण सृजना गरिनुपर्ने देखिन्छ । यस परिस्थितिलाई मध्यनजर गर्दै, लेखक नेपाली सैनिक प्रतिष्ठानको कमाण्डान्ट हुँदा हालको तीनवर्षे लामो अधिकृत आधार तालिमलाई

छोट्याउन तालिम अवधि १६, १८, २४ र २८ महिनाको विभिन्न विकल्पहरू सहितका पाठ्यक्रम प्रस्तुत गरेको तथ्य स्मरणयोग्य छ। यसैगरी, सामूहिक तालिम २०७८ अघि सञ्चालन हुन लागेको युवक अधिकृत तालिममा सहभागी हुन अधिकृतहरू पठाउँदा सामूहिक तालिममा अधिकृतको कमी हुने तथा सामूहिक तालिममा सहभागी भइसकेपछि उनीहरूको पेशागत ज्ञानको स्तर थप अभिवृद्धि हुने देखिएकाले, तत्कालीन पूर्वी कमाण्ड हेडक्वाटरले पत्राचारमार्फत युवक अधिकृत तालिमको सुरु मिति संशोधन गर्न अनुरोध गरेको र उक्त अनुरोधलाई जङ्गी अड्डाबाट स्वीकृति प्राप्त भएको विगतको उदाहरणसमेत विद्यमान छ।

Staff Duties: बाहिनी र गण तहमा योजना प्रक्रिया अनुसार Planning त्यसको अभ्यासमा अन्तरहरू पाइएको हुँदा सामूहिक तालिमकै दौरान हरेक तहका पति एवम् स्टाफहरूको पेशागत दक्षता, व्यावसायिकता र आत्मविश्वास अभिवृद्धि गर्न सबै तहमा लागू गर्नु पर्ने Staff Planning Tools को प्रयोगमा जोड दिन आवश्यक देखिएको थियो।

Load Table: सामूहिक तालिमको साथै अधिकृत तथा सैन्यहरूको आधारभूत तालिमहरूमा समेत Force March तथा CFT, १८ के. जी. बालुवाको प्याकको सङ्ग तोकिएको Load Table अनुसार Field Service Marching Order मा सञ्चालन गर्नुपर्ने आवश्यकता महसूस गरिएको थियो।

अनिवार्य रूपमा जानैपर्ने कार्यसूची: सैनिक तालिम महानिर्देशनालयबाट प्रकाशित उक्त सूचीलाई युनिट निरन्तरता तालिम र सामूहिक तालिममा प्राथमिकताका साथ समावेश गर्दै, त्यसैका आधारमा हुने पेशागत निरीक्षणमार्फत सबै सैनिक निकायहरूका सकल दर्जाका ज्ञान, दक्षता र तयारीको मूल्याङ्कन गर्ने मापदण्ड लागु गर्ने व्यवस्था सान्दर्भिक हुन्छ।

रात्रीकालीन तालिम: रात्रीकालीन परिचालन युद्धकलाको अनिवार्य आयाम भएकाले सामूहिक तालिम प्रणालीभित्र यसलाई उच्च प्राथमिकताका साथ संस्थागत गर्नु आवश्यक देखिन्छ। यसलाई अभ्र प्रभावकारी बनाउन उपलब्ध अप्टिकल तथा रात्री निगरानी उपकरणहरूलाई युनिट-स्तरमा अभ्यासमार्फत प्रयोगमा ल्याउनु अपरिहार्य हुन्छ। साथै, मितव्ययी किसिमका मानवरहित उडान गर्ने साधनहरू (Drone) जस्ता आधुनिक प्रविधिले युद्धशैलीमा ल्याएको परिवर्तनलाई ध्यानमा राख्दै सामूहिक तालिमका क्रममा रात्रीकालीन फायरिड तथा अभ्यासहरू सञ्चालन गरी फौजलाई अभ्यस्त बनाउनुपर्छ।

सहभागिताको स्तर: नेपाली सेनामा हाल सञ्चालन गरिने अधिकांश सामूहिक तालिमहरू प्रायः पत्ती, सेनामुख वा गुल्म तहमा सीमित रहने गरेको पाइन्छ र गण तथा बाहिनी तहमा पनि सीमित दायरा र सहभागिताका आधारमा तालिम सञ्चालन गरिने परम्परा रहेको छ। यस परिप्रेक्ष्यमा, सामूहिक तालिमको प्रभावकारिता अभिवृद्धि गर्न सहभागिताको स्तर विस्तार गर्नु अपरिहार्य देखिन्छ। गण हे.क्वा. तथा वाहिनी अड्डाहरूलाई पूर्ण रूपमा तालिममा समावेश गराउने तथा पृतना हेडक्वाटर र जंगी अड्डाका सम्बन्धित विभाग तथा निर्देशनालयहरूलाई समेत अभ्यासको योजना निर्माण, निर्णय-प्रणाली (decision loop) र कार्यान्वयन प्रक्रियाभित्र सक्रिय रूपमा समावेश गरी उत्तरदायी बनाउनु आवश्यक छ।

तालिमहरूको पहिचान, प्राथमिकीकरण तथा व्यवस्थापन: मजबुत राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाको सुनिश्चितताका लागि आन्तरिक Defense Review लाई संस्थागत अभ्यासको रूपमा अङ्गीकार गर्दै Risk-based approach मार्फत आवश्यक क्षमताहरूको पहिचान, प्राथमिकीकरण तथा व्यवस्थापन गर्नु अपरिहार्य हुन्छ। यस अन्तर्गत, लागत-सङ्गत निर्णय (Cost Informed) को आधारमा क्षमताहरूलाई तीन श्रेणीमा वर्गीकृत गर्न सकिन्छ: अत्यावश्यक र तत्काल परिचालन आवश्यक क्षमताहरूलाई Rapid Response Capability अन्तर्गत, हाल तत्काल आवश्यक नभए तापनि पुनर्निर्माण तथा तयारी गर्न लामो समय लाग्ने न्यूनतम क्षमताहरूलाई Reconstituted Capability अन्तर्गत र हाल कम प्राथमिकताका तर पुनःसृजना गर्न सहज क्षमताहरूलाई Regenerative Capability अन्तर्गत राख्दै सम्पूर्ण सैनिक संरचनालाई Operations-Oriented बनाउनु उपयुक्त हुन्छ। यसरी वर्गीकरण गर्दा अपरेसनल अनुसन्धानका प्रमुख आयामहरू - दक्षता, प्रभावकारिता तथा मितव्ययिताको मूल्याङ्कन र परीक्षण गर्न सहज हुन्छ। यसैले क्षमतागत वर्गीकरणहरूलाई नीतिगत एजेण्डाका रूपमा निरन्तर समावेश गरिनु आवश्यक देखिन्छ। यसै सन्दर्भमा सैनिक तालिम पक्षलाई हेर्दा प्रधानसेनापतिको नीति तथा मार्गनिर्देशन मार्फत निर्दिष्ट कार्यको साथै युद्धकार्य विभागबाट प्राप्त अपरेसनल आवश्यकताहरूलाई पूर्ति गर्न तयार गरिएका सैनिक तालिमसम्बन्धी अवधारणाहरूलाई Risk-based approach मार्फत परीक्षण गर्न उपयुक्त हुन्छ। तालिम अवधारणाहरूको कार्यान्वयनबाट केही पहलहरूले अपेक्षित सफलता हासिल गर्छन् भने केही प्रयासहरूले अपेक्षाअनुरूप परिणाम दिन नसक्ने यथार्थले तालिम अवधारणामा निरन्तर पुनरावलोकन र अनुकूलनको जरूरत पर्दछ।

यसै प्रसङ्गमा नेपाली सेनामा सकल दर्जाका विभिन्न वृत्ति विकासका तालिमहरूमा केही तालिमहरू पुनरावृत्ति तथा केही तालिमहरूबीच दोहोरोपन यथावत् रहेको अवस्थामा यसले अनावश्यक आर्थिक भार वृद्धि गराउनुको साथै निरन्तर जनशक्ति अभावको समस्या उत्पन्न गराएको थियो। यस यथार्थलाई सम्बोधन गर्ने उद्देश्यले लेखक सैनिक तालिम महानिर्देशनालयको महानिर्देशकको हैसियतमा कार्यरत रहँदा अनावश्यक तथा एक-आपसमा दोहोरिने तालिमहरूलाई स्थगन र समायोजन गर्ने नीति अवलम्बन गर्दै पाइलट प्रोजेक्टका रूपमा १६ वटा तालिमहरू सञ्चालन गरिएको थियो। उक्त पहलबाट उल्लेखनीय रूपमा स्रोत-साधनको बचत भएको तथ्य देखा परेको थियो। यस्ता सुधारात्मक प्रयासहरूलाई संस्थागत रूपमा निरन्तरता दिनुपर्ने आवश्यकता देखिन्छ। साथै, वृत्ति विकाससम्बन्धी तालिमबाट दक्षता हासिल गरेका सकलदर्जाको प्रमाणीकरण युनिट-स्तरको सामूहिक तालिममार्फत गरिने व्यवस्था मिलाइयो भने तालिम प्रणालीभित्रको दोहोरोपन न्यून भई विभिन्न तालिमहरू बीच सामञ्जस्य कायम हुनसक्ने देखिन्छ। यसका लागि निरन्तर मूल्याङ्कन प्रणाली तथा विस्तृत पृष्ठपोषण संयन्त्रको विकास अपरिहार्य हुन्छ।

यसै गरी पहाडी भू-भागको प्रतिरक्षा सम्भावना र लडाइँ लड्ने ढाँचालाई मध्य नजर गर्दा मध्य पहाडी क्षेत्रलाई सैद्धान्तिक रूपमा महत्त्व दिइए तापनि हाम्रो अधिकतम तालिम शिक्षालयहरू तराईमा अवस्थित भएकोले हाम्रो सैद्धान्तिक सोच र व्यावहारिक पक्ष बीच ठूलो व्यवसायिक विरोधाभास पाइएको छ। यसले नेपाली सेनाका सकल दर्जाको शारीरिक सहनशीलता र पहाडी युद्धकलाको प्रभावकारितामा असर पारेको छ। तसर्थ, हामीले उक्त तालिम केन्द्रहरूको तराईमा संरचना तयार छ भनेर यथास्थितिमा रही रहने हो भने Sunk Cost Fallacy Syndrome ले हामीलाई भविष्यमा अझ बढी असर पार्ने देखिन्छ। यसैले यस पक्षलाई समेत उपर्युक्त पद्धतिअनुसार परीक्षण गर्दै आवश्यक सुधारात्मक कदम चाल्नु अपरिहार्य देखिन्छ।

एकीकृत क्यालेण्डरको आवश्यकता: नेपाली सेनाको जङ्गी अड्डाका विभिन्न निकायहरू, पृतना हेडक्वाटर, वाहिनी अड्डा तथा गण र गुल्महरूको वार्षिक गतिविधि तथा कार्यक्रमहरू एकआपसमा नदोहोरिने र नजुध्ने गरी समायोजन गर्न सहज होस् भन्ने उद्देश्यले, लेखक सैनिक तालिम महानिर्देशकको नियुक्तिमा कार्यरत हुँदा सबै निकायहरूको अपरेसनल गतिविधि, निरीक्षण कार्यक्रम, समारोह तथा तालिम कार्यतालिकाहरू समेटिएको एकीकृत क्यालेण्डर प्रकाशन गर्ने अभ्यास सुरु गरिएको थियो । यसले कार्यसम्पादनमा समन्वय, पूर्वयोजना तथा मानव स्रोत व्यवस्थापनमा उल्लेखनीय सहजता ल्याएको अनुभवका आधारमा यस प्रणालीलाई अझ सुदृढ गर्दै निरन्तरता दिन आवश्यक देखिन्छ । संख्यात्मक भन्दा गुणात्मक पक्षलाई प्राथमिकतामा राखी तयार गरिने यस्तो क्यालेण्डरको उपलब्धताले माथिल्लो निकायको कार्ययोजनासँग नबाझिने गरी मातहत निकायहरूले आफ्ना आवश्यकता अनुसारका गतिविधि र कार्यक्रमहरू सुव्यवस्थित रूपमा योजना गर्न सक्ने आधार प्रदान गर्दछ । नेपालका विभिन्न स्थानबीचको भौगोलिक दूरी, सकल दर्जाले २४/७ जिम्मेवारी वहन गर्नुपर्ने अवस्था, आवागमनमा लाग्ने व्यक्तिगत आर्थिक बोझ, सामाजिक परिवेश तथा मौसमी कृषिमा आधारित दायित्वहरूलाई दृष्टिगत गर्दा हालको सकल दर्जाले प्राप्त गर्ने बिदाको व्यवस्था अपर्याप्त देखिएको छ । विगतमा लेखक नम्बर ३ वाहिनीको वाहिनीपति हुँदा गरेको अध्ययनले सकल दर्जालाई वर्षमा न्यूनतम ८५ दिनसम्म बिदाको अवसर उपलब्ध गराउँदा पारिवारिक दवाब न्यून भई सँगठनप्रति उनीहरूको योगदान अझ प्रभावकारी हुने पुष्टि गरेको थियो । बिदा व्यवस्थालाई नियमित, पारदर्शी र योजनाबद्ध बनाउँदै सामूहिक तालिमका अवधिमा समेत गण-गुल्म स्तरसम्म सकल दर्जाको पूर्ण सहभागिता सुनिश्चित गर्न एकीकृत क्यालेण्डर सहायक माध्यमका रूपमा स्थापित हुन्छ ।

BMI को पुनरावलोकन: नेपाली सेनामा हाल प्रचलित रासनको पौष्टिक संरचनामा कार्बोहाइड्रेटको मात्रा अत्यधिक र प्रोटीनको मात्रा तुलनात्मक रूपमा न्यून भएकोले यसले शरीरमा बोसोको मात्रा बढाई सरदर व्यक्तिको वजन अवश्य नै बढाउँदछ । यस परिप्रेक्ष्यलाई विचार गर्दा नेपालीहरूको औसत कद र कार्बोहाइड्रेट युक्त खानाको अत्यधिक सेवन गर्ने संस्कारबीच उचाइ-वजन अनुपातमा आधारित BMI प्रणाली वैज्ञानिक रूपमा न्यायसंगत देखिँदैन । विगतको द्वन्द्वकालीन अनुभवले सिकाएअनुसार हाम्रो जस्तो विकट भौगोलिक परिवेशमा काम गर्नुपर्ने सकल दर्जालाई सीमित खानाको भरमा लामो समयसम्म उच्च शारीरिक सहनशीलता कायम राख्नको लागि उनीहरूको शरीरमा आवश्यक मात्रामा बोसो (fat reserve) हुनै पर्दछ भन्ने मान्यतालाई BMI प्रणालीले नकार्दछ ।

नेपाली सेनाको वार्षिक कार्ययोजनामा सामूहिक तालिम र वार्षिक शारीरिक परीक्षण प्रायः एउटै समयवाधिमा सञ्चालन हुने हुनाले यस समयमा BMI सचेत सैनिकहरूले खानपानमा अनावश्यक कटौती गरेर छोटो समयमा तौल घटाउने प्रचलन बढिरहेको छ । परिणामस्वरूप यस प्रवृत्तिले उच्च शारीरिक सहनशीलता आवश्यक पर्ने अवस्थामा उनीहरूको शरीर कमजोर र जीर्ण भई यसले व्यक्तिको तालिम ग्रहण गर्ने क्षमतालाई घटाइरहेको छ । सैनिक व्यक्तिको शरीर कसिलो, दरिलो र सुगठित हुनुपर्ने मान्यता विपरीत नेपाली सेनाको वर्तमान रासन व्यवस्था र BMI केन्द्रित मूल्यांकन प्रणालीको नकारात्मक प्रभावले अधिकांश सैनिकहरूको शारीरिक बनावटलाई अस्वाभाविक र असन्तुलित बनाइरहेको देखिन्छ । यसैले मांसपेशीयुक्त सक्षम शरीरलाई “ओभरवेट” र कमजोर, हलुका, जीर्ण, कुपोषणरूपी शरीरलाई “फिट” ठहर गर्ने मापदण्डलाई वैज्ञानिक भन्न सकिँदैन ।

यसै सन्दर्भमा लेखकले विगतको पृतनापति सम्मेलनमा हाल प्रचलित शारीरिक परीक्षण प्रणालीमा BMI लाई प्रमुख सूचकका रूपमा प्रयोग गर्ने अभ्यास पुनर्विचार गरी यसको बदलामा शरीरको वास्तविक मांसपेशी, कार्यक्षमता र सहनशीलता मापन गर्न सक्ने उपयुक्त प्रणाली अवलम्बन गर्नु समयानुकूल हुने, अथवा यदि यही प्रणालीलाई निरन्तरता दिने हो भने नेपाल सरकारले नेपाली सेनाको रासन व्यवस्थामा आवश्यक परिमार्जन गर्नुपर्ने सम्बन्धमा सुझाव प्रस्तुत गरेकोमा उक्त विकल्पहरूमध्ये कुनै एकलाई अवलम्बन गर्न उपयुक्त देखिन्छ।

गण तथा गुल्मका लागि सुझावहरू

सामूहिक तालिममा तालिम प्राप्त पत्ती तथा सेनामुखलाई सामान्य अवस्थामा पनि यथासम्भव एकबद्ध राखी परिचालन गर्दा Esprit de Corps/Unit Cohesion सुदृढ भई समग्र कार्यप्रभावकारिता अभिवृद्धि हुन्छ। गण/गुल्म तहका सकलदर्जालाई सीमित समयमा सम्पूर्ण आधारभूत विषय समेट्ने प्रयास समय र स्रोतको हिसाबले खर्चिलो हुने भएकाले, Mission Essential Task List अनुसार प्राथमिक कार्य निर्धारण गरी जवानहरूको Aptitude, Skill/Knowledge (ASK) को मूल्याङ्कनका आधारमा पहिचान गरिएका कमजोर पक्षमा केन्द्रित रही तालिम सञ्चालन गर्दा युनिटको कार्यदक्षता उल्लेखनीय रूपमा वृद्धि हुन्छ। साथै, समूहिक तालिमलाई कार्यबोझको रूपमा ग्रहण नगरी, यसलाई युनिट, सब युनिटहरूका सकल दर्जाले विशेष महापर्वको रूपमा लिन सबै तहका पत्तीहरूले आफ्नो फौजमा निरन्तर रूपमा उत्प्रेरणा जगाइराख्नु अपरिहार्य छ। यस सन्दर्भमा Field Marshal Wavell को निम्न भनाइ मनन गर्न सान्दर्भिक देखिन्छ।

“यदि कुनै अभ्यासपछि अधिकृत मेशमा छलफल हुन्छ भने सो अभ्यास सायद सार्थक छ, यदि त्यही कुरा पढिक मेशमा हुन्छ भने त्यसमा तर्क छ कि त्यो एक राम्रो अभ्यास सावित भयो, यदि बिल्लादारको वासस्थानमा त्यसबारे छलफल हुन्छ भने यो निःसन्देह एक सफलता हो।”

रक्षा मन्त्रालयलाई सुझाव

सामूहिक तालिमलाई सामान्य तालिम अभ्यासको रूपमा नभई रणनीतिक लगानी (strategic investment) का रूपमा हेर्नु पर्दछ। यसैले वार्षिक तालिमको प्रभावकारिता अभिवृद्धिको लागि पर्याप्त बजेट, स्रोत साधनको व्यवस्थाको लागि पहल गरिदिनु रक्षा मन्त्रालयको प्रमुख जिम्मेवारी हो। वार्षिक रूपमा सञ्चालन हुने सामूहिक तालिम राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा नीतिको मर्मसँग सञ्चालन भएको यकिन गर्नुपर्दछ। यसै अवसरमा रक्षा मन्त्रालयले रणनीतिक मार्गदर्शन (Strategic Guidance) दिने जिम्मेवारीको समेत अभ्यास गर्न सान्दर्भिक हुन्छ। प्रमुख राष्ट्रिय सरोकारवाला निकायहरूलाई समेत समेटेी सामूहिक तालिममा Whole of Nations/Government Approach अनुसार ठुला स्तरको संयुक्त अभ्यासहरू समेत सञ्चालन गर्न पहल गर्न उपयुक्त हुन्छ। अन्ततः सामूहिक तालिमबाट प्राप्त सिकाइ र पाठहरूलाई संस्थागत पृष्ठपोषणमा समाहित गरी राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा नीति, प्रतिरक्षा नीतिलाई अद्यावधिक गर्ने समेत रक्षा मन्त्रालयको प्रमुख जिम्मेवारी हो।

आगामी कार्यदिशा

नेपाली सेनाको प्रमुख तथा सहायक जिम्मेवारीहरूलाई परिपूरक बनाउँदै नेपाली सेनाले सहायक कार्यहरू सम्पादनको दौरान आफ्ना प्रमुख जिम्मेवारीहरू समेत ध्यानमा राखेर आफूलाई तयार गर्दै लैजानुपर्ने हुन्छ।

जिम्मेवारीमा रहेका सहायक कार्यहरूलाई हाम्रो पेशागत दक्षताको व्यावसायिक प्रतिकूलता नसम्झी प्रमुख कार्यहरू अनुकूल वातावरण बनाउन प्रयत्नशील हुनुपर्छ । जलविद्युत् आयोजनामा तैनाथ रहँदा Mission Command को अभ्यास, सैनिक मिलापका साधनहरूको परीक्षण, अति महत्त्वपूर्ण स्थानहरूको सुरक्षा सम्बन्धी ज्ञान विस्तार, सेनामुख तथा पत्तीको पूर्ण नफ्रीमा कार्य गर्ने क्षमता अभिवृद्धि हुने देखिन्छ भने राष्ट्रिय निकुञ्ज तथा वन्यजन्तु आरक्षमा तैनाथ रहँदा विभिन्न किसिमको भौगोलिक तथा मौसमी अवस्थाहरूसँग अभिमुखीकरण, जङ्गल क्राफ्टको ज्ञान विस्तार, सानो टुकडीमा गरिने कारवाही सम्बन्धी ज्ञान तथा अभ्यास, Mission Command को अभ्यास, विभिन्न आधुनिक उपकरण सम्बन्धी जानकारी, सैनिक मिलापको परीक्षण, स्रोत प्राप्ति र त्यसको उपयोग सम्बन्धी दक्षता तथा सामरिक महत्त्व भएका विभिन्न स्थानहरूमा समेत फौजको रणनीतिक उपस्थिति प्राप्त हुन्छ । शान्ति सेनामा तैनाथ रहँदा दृढ मुद्रा अपनाउँदै द्वन्द्व व्यवस्थापन गर्ने सम्बन्धी ज्ञान र अनुभव अभिवृद्धि, फरक किसिमको सुरक्षा चुनौतीहरूसँग अभ्यस्त भई त्यसलाई समाधान गर्ने मौका प्राप्त, अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय मञ्चमा कार्य गरी दक्षता तथा आत्मविश्वासमा वृद्धि हुने तथा आधुनिक स्रोत-साधनहरू प्रयोग गर्ने अवसर प्राप्त हुन्छ । यसैगरी, तराई-मधेश द्रुतमार्ग जस्ता राष्ट्रिय गौरवको आयोजना सहितको अन्य निर्माण कार्यहरूमा खटिँदा सेनाको निर्माण क्षमताको साथै प्लाण्ट-इक्विपमेण्ट जस्ता स्रोतहरूको विस्तार हुने, प्राविधिक ज्ञान थप भई निर्माणसम्बन्धी दक्ष जनशक्तिलाई फिल्डको अनुभव तथा अभ्यास प्राप्त हुने, आफ्नो स्रोत-साधनको जगेर्ना हुने तथा सेनाको पुनः निर्माण गर्ने क्षमताको विकास हुने देखिन्छ । विपद् व्यवस्थापन सम्बन्धी कार्यमा खटिँदा नेपाली सेनाको तयारीपन दुरुस्त रहनुका साथै मानव तथा स्रोत-साधनको समेत निरन्तर तयारी हालतमा राख्ने प्रचलनको विकास हुने, आवश्यकता अनुसार तुरुन्तै तैनाथ हुनसक्ने क्षमता कायम रहने देखिन्छ । यी सबै अभ्यासहरूबाट नेपाली सेनाले निर्वाह गर्नुपर्ने प्रमुख जिम्मेवारीहरू वहन गर्नको लागि मद्दत पुग्दछ ।

उपसंहार

वर्तमान बहुआयामिक सुरक्षा परिवेशबीच सेनाको भूमिका केवल परम्परागत सैनिक जिम्मेवारीमा मात्र सीमित नरहेको अवस्थामा राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षाका विभिन्न आयामहरू जस्तै आर्थिक स्थायित्व, सामाजिक एकता, राजनीतिक वैधता, सुशासन र मानव सुरक्षाका अवधारणाहरूलाई समेत ध्यानमा राख्दै, नियमित सञ्चालन गरिने सामूहिक तालिमलाई राष्ट्रिय सङ्कट व्यवस्थापन र राज्य स्थायित्व सुदृढ गर्ने रणनीतिक साधनको रूपमा विकास गर्नु आवश्यक देखिन्छ ।

सामूहिक तालिममार्फत विकसित हुने अनुशासित र व्यावसायिक सैन्य क्षमताले सेनालाई बहुआयामिक सुरक्षा चुनौतीहरूको प्रभावकारी रूपमा सामना गर्न सक्षम बनाउँछ । यसरी तयार भएको सेना राष्ट्रलाई आन्तरिक तथा बाह्य सङ्कटबाट जोगाउने, सार्वभौमिक स्थायित्व कायम राख्ने तथा लोकतन्त्र र सुशासनको संरक्षण गर्ने एक बहुआयामिक सुरक्षा संस्थाको रूपमा आफ्नो भूमिका निर्वाह गर्न सक्षम हुन्छ । सामूहिक तालिमलाई राष्ट्रिय सुरक्षा दायित्व वहन गर्ने जिम्मेवारीको आधार स्तम्भ मानी हामीले हाम्रा रणकौशल, प्रविधि, कार्यप्रणाली र डकिट्रनलाई परीक्षण गरी परिष्कृत समेत गर्न सक्छौं । समग्रमा गतिशील, उत्थानशील र अभ्यस्त फौज तयार गर्न सामूहिक तालिम महत्त्वपूर्ण आवश्यकता हो भन्नेमा दुई मत छैन ।

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Nepal's Contribution to Gender-Responsive Peacekeeping: Women Peacekeepers and UN SEAH Responsibility



✉ **Bal Sagar Giri**

Abstract

Nepal has recently become the top contributor of uniformed personnel to UN peacekeeping missions, deploying over 6,000 troops and police, surpassing other major contributors like India, Rwanda, Bangladesh, and Pakistan (The Kathmandu Post, 2024a). Along with this numerical growth, Nepal has also increased the participation of women peacekeepers, who now make up approximately 10 percent of its deployed personnel (The Kathmandu Post, 2024a). However, worldwide, the rise in women's involvement in peace operations has been accompanied by ongoing reports of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH) targeting both host communities and women within UN missions (Donnelly et al., 2022). In response, the UN has adopted a "zero-tolerance" policy and established the Trust Fund in Support of Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. This fund is financed through voluntary contributions from Member States and reimbursements withheld from troop- and police-contributing countries (T/PCCs) (United Nations, n.d.).

This article places Nepal's peacekeeping role within ongoing global discussions. Using UN data, policy documents, and recent scholarly work, it explores (a) Nepal's rise as the leading contributor to UN peacekeeping; (b) patterns and challenges of women's participation in Nepali contingents; (c) the extent and nature of SEAH in peace operations, with a focus on women peacekeepers; and (d) the normative and institutional responses, including the Trust Fund in Support of Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (TFSVSEA). It contends that Nepal's key role in UN peacekeeping presents both opportunities and responsibilities: to promote gender-responsive peacekeeping, to strengthen national and mission-level safeguards against SEAH, and to align policies, training, and accountability measures with the UN's victim-centered approach. The article concludes with recommendations for Nepal's security agencies, the UN, and academic research related to peacekeeping and gender justice.

Keywords: UN peacekeeping, women peacekeepers, sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment, Trust Fund in Support of Victims, gender, security sector reform.

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Introduction

Over the past decade, peacekeeping has undergone significant changes due to budget cuts, complex conflicts, and increased scrutiny of peacekeeper misconduct (Relief Web, n.d.). At the same time, the UN has promoted a strong agenda on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) and gender parity in peace operations, seeking to boost women's representation and leadership in both civilian and uniformed roles (United Nations Peacekeeping, n.d.). In this evolving environment, Nepal has emerged as a central actor.

According to data drawn from the UN Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and reports from both national and international media, Nepal had become the top troop contributor to UN peacekeeping by late 2023, with approximately 6,247 military and police personnel participating in various missions (The Kathmandu Post, 2024a; 2024b). A 2024 global contributors report ranked Nepal first, with 6,110 peacekeepers (including 5,458 men and 652 women), surpassing countries like India, Rwanda, and Bangladesh (UNDPO, 2024). For a small, landlocked country with limited hard power, this peacekeeping role has become a vital aspect of its foreign policy, defense diplomacy, and international standing.

This quantitative achievement aligns with another important goal: ensuring women have meaningful roles in peacekeeping. By late 2023, Nepal had deployed 608 women, about 10 percent of its peacekeepers, in UN missions, and over 2,500 Nepali women have taken part in peace operations since 1958 (The Kathmandu Post, 2024a). Nevertheless, women peacekeepers worldwide and within missions still face male-dominated institutional cultures, gender-based obstacles to promotion and deployment, and in some cases, sexual harassment and abuse by colleagues or other mission personnel (Donnelly & Mazurana, 2025).

Alongside efforts to increase women's participation, the UN continues to face allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by peacekeepers against local populations. A 2024 UN report recorded 102 allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation in UN peacekeeping and political missions, identifying 125 victims, primarily women and girls; two missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic accounted for 82 percent of these cases (AP News, 2025). This has sparked intense debate over accountability, state responsibility, and the ethics of peacekeeping.

This article proceeds from the premise that Nepal, as the leading troop contributor and an increasing provider of women peacekeepers, must critically address SEAH issues both internationally and within its own deployments. It asks:

- How has Nepal's involvement in UN peacekeeping evolved, and what is its current situation concerning troop contributions and gender representation?
- How do worldwide trends in women's involvement and SEAH issues in peacekeeping missions influence the risks and opportunities faced by Nepali women peacekeepers?

- What is the importance of the UN's Trust Fund in Supporting Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, and how does it connect to the obligations of troop- and police-contributing countries like Nepal?
- What policy, legal, and institutional reforms are necessary in Nepal and UN missions to promote gender-responsive and victim-focused peacekeeping?

The article relies on a qualitative review of UN policy documents, official statistics, annual reports of the Trust Fund, and recent academic literature on gender and peacekeeping. It is also supplemented by publicly available data on Nepal's contributions.

Methods Note: Use of Legal and Policy Sources

This article presents a qualitative document analysis of international, national, and institutional legal and policy sources to explore Nepal's involvement in gender-responsive peacekeeping and its obligations regarding sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (SEAH). Primary sources include United Nations policy documents, peacekeeping data, annual reports, as well as Nepal's constitutional provisions, criminal laws, security sector legislation, and National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security. These legal and policy texts are viewed not merely as descriptive texts but as normative tools influencing institutional behavior, accountability systems, and the country's responsibilities in peacekeeping. Following standard methods in peacekeeping and security research, these sources are cross-verified with scholarly literature and credible investigative reports to evaluate both official commitments and actual practice. This methodology enables an examination of how international norms on gender and SEAH are internalized, operationalized, or contested within Nepal's peacekeeping efforts.

Nepal's Changing Role in UN Peacekeeping

Historical trajectory

Nepal began its involvement in UN peacekeeping in the late 1950s. The Nepal Army initially sent military observers to the UN Observer Group in Lebanon in 1958, shortly after Nepal became a member of the United Nations (The Kathmandu Post, 2024a). Since then, Nepali troops have participated in over forty UN missions across Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and the Balkans. These include significant deployments such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo - United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission (MONUSCO); South Sudan - United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS); the Central African Republic - United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission (MINUSCA); Lebanon - United Nations Interim Force (UNIFIL); and others (The Kathmandu Post, 2024a).

By early 2024, the Nepal Army reported that 149,890 Nepali peacekeepers had participated in UN missions since 1958. This includes personnel from the Army, Armed Police Force, and Nepal Police. They also reported that 73 peacekeepers had died and 68 were wounded during their service (The Kathmandu Post, 2024a). Peacekeeping has become a core part of Nepal's military identity, providing vital professional training, international exposure, and economic advantages for soldiers.

Becoming the top uniformed personnel contributor

Recent UN data and independent reports indicate that by late 2023 and into 2024, Nepal emerged as the top contributor of UN peacekeeping personnel, including military contingents, formed police units, and individual officers (The Kathmandu Post, 2024a; 2024b; UNDPO, 2025). As of 30 November 2023, Nepal deployed 6,247 personnel, surpassing Bangladesh (6,197), India (approximately 6,073), and Rwanda (5,919) (The Kathmandu Post, 2024a). A 2024 global ranking of contributing countries also placed Nepal at the top, with 6,110 peacekeepers, including 652 women (UNDPO, 2024).

This prominent role is impressive, considering Nepal's relatively small population and limited economic resources. On a per-capita basis, Nepal's contribution rate of over 200 peacekeepers per million residents greatly exceeds that of many larger countries (UNDPO, 2024). Peacekeeping has, in turn, provided Nepal:

- ***International visibility:*** A way to promote international visibility and diplomatic goodwill.
- ***Professionalization:*** Opportunities for training and professional development of its security forces.
- ***Financial flows:*** Access to UN reimbursements that supplement national defense budgets; and
- ***Normative participation:*** A platform for engaging in global security governance despite limited traditional power (Institute of South Asian Studies [ISAS], 2024).

Institutional infrastructure: Training and coordination

To maintain this level of contribution, Nepal has established specialized training and institutional mechanisms, including the Birendra Peace Operations Training Centre in Panchkhal, which provides pre-deployment training for Nepali and international peacekeepers (The Kathmandu Post, 2024a). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defense, the Nepal Army, the Armed Police Force, and the Nepal Police work together to coordinate peacekeeping deployments and engage with the UN Department of Peace Operations (DPO).

The same institutional infrastructure can and arguably must serve as a platform to integrate gender issues and fight SEAH through:

- Pre-deployment training on UN standards of conduct, human rights, and gender equality.
- Including UN Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace, and Security in training curricula; and
- Collaboration with the UN and civil society partners on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) (United Nations in Nepal, 2023).

Women, Gender, and Nepali Peacekeepers

Global patterns of women's participation

Women have historically been underrepresented in peacekeeping worldwide, especially in military contingents. In 1993, women constituted about 1 percent of uniformed personnel in UN missions. By 2022, this increased to 7.9 percent of all military, police, justice, and corrections personnel in peacekeeping operations (UNDPO, 2022). Currently, women constitute 5.9 percent of military contingents, 14.4 percent of police contingents, and 43 percent of justice and corrections personnel (UNDPO, 2022).

The UN's Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy establishes phased targets for women's representation across various categories and tracks progress through monthly gender statistics. In 2024, the goal is 11 percent women in troop contingents and 21 percent women among military experts on mission and staff officers (UNDPO, 2025). Although police units are nearing these targets, women are still significantly under-represented in military contingents, particularly at senior ranks, with progress remaining uneven (UNDPO, 2025; UN Women, 2025).

Women peacekeepers from Nepal

Within this global context, Nepal has achieved significant but incomplete progress. By late 2023, the Nepal Army reported that 2,554 Nepali women had participated in UN peacekeeping missions, with 608 women (10 percent of the total deployment) serving at that point (The Kathmandu Post, 2024a). These women work as soldiers, staff officers, police officers, and members of formed police units, deployed to missions including MONUSCO, UNMISS, MINUSCA, UNIFIL, and others.

Nepal's relatively high proportion of women troops (10 percent) is notably higher than the global average of 5.9 percent for military contingents. Despite this, it still falls short of gender parity and UN police benchmarks (UNDPO, 2022). Obstacles to increased participation include:

- Gendered recruitment patterns in the Nepal Army and police;
- Cultural norms restricting women's involvement in combat and overseas deployment.
- Concerns about family responsibilities and security risks;
- Limited number of women in senior ranks eligible for staff and leadership positions.

Why women peacekeepers matter

Research and UN policy documents emphasize several reasons why involving women in peacekeeping improves operational effectiveness, legitimacy, and protection results. Women peacekeepers can better connect with communities, particularly women and children; increase reporting of gender-based violence; and serve as role models for local women's engagement in public life (UNDPO, 2022; UN Women, 2025). Additionally, diverse teams tend to make better decisions and foster trust in fragile environments.

For Nepal, investing in women peacekeepers is not just about gender justice; it also offers a strategic advantage. It boosts Nepal's leadership in modern, rights-based peacekeeping and supports its commitments under United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325 and related Women, Peace and Security (WPS) resolutions.

Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment in Peacekeeping Missions

SEA directed at host communities

The UN has long been criticized for sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) committed by peacekeepers targeting local populations, including rape, sexual assault, coercive transactional sex under coercive conditions, and the exploitation of minors (Human Rights Watch, 2016, 2017; United States Institute of Peace [USIP], 2018). Such actions violate international human rights standards, laws of host states, and UN codes of conduct.

A 2024 UN General Assembly report highlighted that allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse in UN peacekeeping and political missions surpassed 100 for the third time in ten years. There were 102 allegations involving 125 victims, including 98 adults and 27 children. In most of these cases, 82% were linked to MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and MINUSCA in the Central African Republic. Although these figures reflect only reported incidents, they underscore the ongoing and systemic challenges related to this issue.

Sexual Harassment and Abuse against Women Peacekeepers

Recent studies have broadened the scope from SEA targeting local civilians to include sexual harassment and abuse directed at peacekeeping personnel, particularly women. Evidence indicates a pattern of "blue-on-blue" abuse, involving sexual harassment, coercion, and assault committed by male colleagues, superiors, or other mission staff against women peacekeepers (Donnelly & Mazurana, 2025; Westendorf & Dolan-Evans, 2025). It indicates that:

- Women peacekeepers and aid workers report higher rates of sexual harassment and assault compared to their male counterparts.
- A significant number of women have witnessed sexual abuse of others within missions.
- Institutional responses tend to be weak, with under-reporting caused by fear of retaliation, career damage, and lack of trust in complaint mechanisms (Donnelly et al., 2022; Donnelly, 2025).

The UN and partners increasingly use the broader acronym SEAH (Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment) to capture this continuum of misconduct both inside and outside missions (Donnelly & Mazurana, 2025). However, policy and data systems are still more advanced for SEA against host populations than for sexual harassment occurring within mission workplaces.

Root causes and structural drivers

Literature on SEAH in peacekeeping highlights several structural drivers:

- Militarized masculinities and highly masculine organizational cultures.
- Significant power imbalances exist between troops and local populations, as well as among different ranks within missions.
- Weak oversight, fragmented jurisdiction, and limited criminal accountability for peacekeepers.
- Economic vulnerabilities of host communities and unstable contract conditions for some mission staff.
- Inadequate gender-sensitive training and the lack of women in leadership positions. (Human Rights Watch, 2016, 2017; USIP, 2018; Anania, 2020)

For a country like Nepal, whose troops operate within these broader mission environments, SEAH poses both a reputational risk and a human rights concern, regardless of the nationality of specific perpetrators.

The Trust Fund in Support of Victims of SEA

Establishment and mandate

In 2016, the UN established the Trust Fund to Support Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse to provide more organized assistance to victims of SEA by UN personnel (United Nations, 2016). The Fund is managed by the Department of Management Strategy, Policy, and Compliance (DMSPC) and is funded by:

- Voluntary contributions from Member States, and
- Withheld reimbursements from countries contributing troops and police in cases of verified SEA allegations (USIP, 2018; Anania, 2020).

The Fund supports projects that provide medical care, psychosocial support, legal aid, livelihood assistance, and community-based services for victims and children born from SEA (United Nations, 2024; Relief Web, n.d).

Scale of contributions and projects

Initial reports showed small contributions, but support from Member States has increased consistently. For instance, India became the first to donate to the Fund in 2016, contributing US\$100,000, thereby symbolically linking its status as a significant Troop Contributing Country (TCC) to its responsibility to support victims (The Tribune, 2016). A 2021-22 progress report across multiple sectors noted that 24 Member States had contributed over US\$4.3 million, funding at least 16 projects in countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, and South Sudan (GOV.UK, 2022).

Annual reports for 2022-2024 illustrate the Trust Fund's support for multi-year, victim-centered projects and collaboration with UN entities and NGOs to enhance complaint mechanisms and provide long-term support (United Nations, 2024). Publicly available UN communications often do not list all contributing states by name in a single consolidated table, making it challenging to track individual country contributions systematically. However,

the overall trend is clear that TCCs and donor states face increasing pressure to align their rhetorical commitments with actual financial support for survivors.

Implications for countries sending troops

For countries like Nepal, the Trust Fund has three main implications:

- ***Moral and political responsibility:*** As a leading TCC, Nepal should take visible actions to support victims of SEA, regardless of whether its personnel were involved, and align itself with the UN's victim-centered approach.
- ***Financial incentives and sanctions:*** The possibility of withholding reimbursements in cases of verified SEA allegations encourages TCCs to prevent misconduct and prosecute perpetrators (USIP, 2018; Anania, 2020).
- ***Norm diffusion:*** Collaborating with the Fund and associated UN frameworks to assist domestic institutions in adopting higher standards for gender equality, accountability, and victim support (United Nations, 2024).

Nepal's Policies and Practices on Gender and SEAH

National commitments and UN frameworks

Nepal has officially ratified important international agreements on women's rights and gender equality, such as CEDAW and UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. It has also developed national action plans for Resolutions 1325 and 1820, as well as gender mainstreaming policies in the security sector, to integrate gender perspectives into peacekeeping efforts (Government of Nepal, 2011; 2019).

At the country level in Nepal, UN agencies have focused on preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) by conducting workshops and incorporating SEA prevention into wider cooperation strategies (United Nations Country Team Nepal, 2023). These initiatives establish a normative foundation to ensure that personnel deployed abroad maintain high standards of conduct.

Nepal-Specific Legal and Regulatory Frameworks Related to Gender and SEAH

Apart from its international obligations, Nepal's stance on gender equality and SEAH in peacekeeping is influenced by its domestic constitutional, legal, and institutional frameworks governing the conduct of its security forces.

Constitutional and Statutory Foundations

The Constitution of Nepal (2015) provides a fundamental legal foundation for gender equality and protection against sexual violence. Article 18 guarantees the right to equality and explicitly prohibits discrimination based on sex, while Article 38 affirms women's rights, including safeguards against physical, mental, sexual, psychological, and other types of violence. These constitutional provisions apply to all government institutions, including the Nepal Army, the Nepal Police, and the Armed Police Force, and establish a binding obligation to prevent sexual violence and discrimination by state officials, whether in Nepal or abroad.

Criminal accountability for sexual offenses is mainly regulated by the National Penal Code, 2017 (Muluki Criminal Code), which criminalizes rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and abuse of authority for sexual purposes. These laws apply extraterritorially to Nepali citizens in certain cases, providing the legal foundation for prosecuting peacekeepers accused of sexual exploitation, abuse, or harassment while serving in UN missions.

Military and Police Legal Frameworks

The Army Act, 2006, along with its regulations, governs the discipline and conduct of military personnel. It specifies procedures for courts-martial and internal discipline for members of the Nepal Army, including those serving internationally. Misconduct, such as actions that damage the institution's reputation or violate criminal laws, may lead to disciplinary measures, dismissal, or referral to civilian courts, depending on the severity of the offense.

Similarly, members of the Nepal Police and the Armed Police Force are governed by the Police Act, 1955, the Armed Police Force Act, 2001, and their respective rules and regulations. These legal frameworks authorize internal disciplinary bodies to investigate misconduct and impose sanctions. However, serious criminal offences, such as sexual violence, are handled by civilian criminal courts.

Although these laws do not always explicitly mention sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping situations, they grant Nepal the legal authority to exercise jurisdiction over its deployed personnel. In practice, allegations of SEAH involving Nepali peacekeepers are handled through cooperation between UN investigative bodies and the national military or police justice systems.

Gender Equality and Workplace Harassment Laws

Nepal has also enacted laws specifically addressing gender-based discrimination and workplace harassment. The Sexual Harassment at the Workplace (Prevention) Act, 2015, defines legal terms, complaint procedures, and employer duties to prevent and address sexual harassment. Although primarily aimed at civilian workplaces, the Act reflects evolving national standards on professional behavior and gender-safe work environments, which are increasingly relevant to peacekeeping missions, particularly regarding sexual harassment faced by women peacekeepers.

Additionally, the Domestic Violence (Crime and Punishment) Act, 2009, along with related regulations and policies, reinforces the state's duty to prevent and address gender-based violence. Along with constitutional guarantees, these laws establish a supportive normative framework that condemns sexual violence and promotes victim protection.

National Policies on Women, Peace, and Security

Nepal's National Action Plans (NAP) on UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 (2011; 2019) provide a policy connection between domestic gender commitments and international peacekeeping efforts. They emphasize the security sector as a crucial actor in advancing the Women, Peace,

and Security agenda, prioritizing gender-sensitive training, increased women's participation in security institutions, and measures to protect against sexual and gender-based violence.

Although the NAPs mainly focus on domestic peacebuilding, they clearly acknowledge Nepal's role in UN peacekeeping and the importance of deployed personnel adhering to international standards. Therefore, they provide policy guidance on including gender perspectives and SEAH prevention in peacekeeping training, deployment decisions, and institutional reform.

Gaps in Legal Articulation and Enforcement

Despite this robust legal architecture, significant gaps still exist. Nepal's military and police laws currently lack a unified, peacekeeping-focused legal structure to address SEAH in international missions. Regulations related to sexual offenses are spread across criminal law, disciplinary rules, and policy documents, which can hinder coordination, transparency, and reporting.

Additionally, information about investigations and prosecutions related to SEAH allegations involving peacekeepers is limited. Although confidentiality and due process are essential, the lack of detailed reporting on outcomes can undermine confidence in accountability efforts. Addressing this gap with clearer procedures and transparent public reporting, while still protecting victims, would improve Nepal's legal compliance and its international reputation.

Implications for Gender-Responsive Peacekeeping

Taken together, Nepal's constitutional guarantees, criminal law provisions, security sector legislation, and WPS policies offer a solid legal foundation for preventing and responding to SEAH. However, as Nepal's peacekeeping role expands, the challenge is to turn these norms into consistent practice across deployments. Improving the connection between national law and UN standards, clarifying jurisdictional procedures, and clearly including SEAH in peacekeeping-specific regulations would improve both accountability and gender responsiveness.

Pre-deployment training and codes of conduct

Pre-deployment training at the Birendra Peace Operations Training Centre and police academies usually covers modules on:

- UN codes of conduct and standards on SEA.
- International law concerning humanitarian and human rights issues.
- Cultural sensitivity and civilian protection.
- Gender and sexual violence related to conflict.

Considering Nepal's deployment scale, these modules need regular updates to incorporate the latest UN guidance on SEAH, especially regarding protections for women peacekeepers from harassment and abuse within missions (Mazurana & Donnelly, 2025; UNDPO, 2025).

Gaps and challenges

Despite official commitments, several gaps still exist.

- There is limited public information regarding how Nepal investigates misconduct allegations against its peacekeepers and the outcomes of these cases.
- Lack of enough gender-specific data on complaints from both host populations and Nepali staff.
- The under-representation of women in leadership and decision-making roles can undermine the enforcement of gender-sensitive policies.
- Potential gaps exist in post-deployment debriefing and psychosocial support for returning peacekeepers, especially women who might have faced SEAH.

To maintain its status and responsibilities as the leading TCC, Nepal must deploy a substantial number of troops and also strengthen its institutional culture, legal frameworks, and accountability mechanisms to be both robust and gender-responsive.

Discussion: Shifting from Quantitative to Normative Leadership

Nepal's position as the leading contributor of uniformed personnel to UN peacekeeping operations signifies a significant milestone in its foreign and security policy (The Kathmandu Post, 2024a; UNDP, 2025). However, leadership in peacekeeping is now judged less by quantity and more by other factors, such as the ability of states to:

- Promote gender equality in deployments and mission leadership.
- Prevent and respond to SEAH in a credible, victim-centered manner.
- Contribute to shaping and developing global norms and mechanisms, like the Trust Fund in Support of Victims of SEA.

For Nepal, this means moving from a focus on quantitative leadership, such as being the top troop contributor, to a focus on qualitative and normative leadership, such as setting standards for gender-responsive peacekeeping. Achieving this shift involves:

- Deepening women's participation beyond numbers to include meaningful roles in leadership, operations, and policy.
- Addressing SEAH as a systemic problem that impacts both host communities and peacekeeping personnel, particularly women;
- Aligning national military and police justice systems with international standards to promote accountability and reparations.

The wider UN environment, characterized by persistent SEA allegations and discussions about peacekeeping's credibility, requires countries like Nepal to take proactive steps. Remaining silent or inactive on SEAH could jeopardize victims' rights and damage their international standing (AP News, 2025; Human Rights Watch, 2017).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

This article has explored Nepal's rise as the top contributor of uniformed personnel to UN peacekeeping missions, focusing on gender, women's participation, and the ongoing issues of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (SEAH). It demonstrates that Nepal's strength in peacekeeping, based on troop numbers and growing participation of women peacekeepers, coexists with complex normative responsibilities related to the credibility, ethics, and legitimacy of modern peace operations.

Nepal's commitment to gender-responsive peacekeeping is underpinned by a relatively strong domestic framework of norms and laws. Constitutional provisions ensure equality and women's rights, while the criminalization of sexual violence under the National Penal Code, along with disciplinary policies for the Nepal Army, Police, and Armed Police Force, provide a legal basis to prevent and address SEAH by state personnel. Nevertheless, these regulations are scattered across constitutional, criminal, military, and policy documents, lacking a unified peacekeeping-specific legal framework that consolidates SEAH obligations for personnel on international missions. As Nepal's profile as a leading troop-contributing nation grows in prominence and influence, this fragmentation creates a significant governance gap. To close this gap, implementing more explicit procedural guidance, enhancing transparency in accountability results, and better aligning with UN victim-centered standards would foster legal adherence and position Nepal as a normative leader, beyond just a significant contributor to peacekeeping.

From a gender perspective, Nepal's relatively high proportion of women peacekeepers marks significant progress. However, structural barriers persist, limiting women's access to senior leadership and decision-making roles within missions. Expanding women's participation beyond mere numerical targets to include command, staff, and policy influence is crucial not only for achieving gender equality but also for transforming institutional cultures that enable SEAH. Evidence from peacekeeping research indicates that gender-diverse and accountable institutions are more likely to prevent misconduct, respond credibly to violations, and foster trust with host communities.

Nepal's domestic legal responsibilities are also intertwined with emerging global accountability mechanisms, especially the UN Trust Fund supporting victims of sexual exploitation and abuse. The same criminal and disciplinary laws that enable Nepal to investigate and prosecute peacekeepers for sexual misconduct also form the legal basis for engaging with the Trust Fund's reparative initiatives. This includes cooperating with UN investigations and accepting financial responsibility if misconduct is confirmed. Consequently, contributions to the Trust Fund, whether monetary or in other forms, are not merely voluntary acts of goodwill but align with Nepal's constitutional obligation to protect victims of sexual violence and its statutory obligation to hold state actors accountable for criminal behavior.

Nepal's rise as a leading peacekeeping contributor offers both strategic and ethical prospects. By refining its legal frameworks regarding SEAH, increasing transparency and accountability, promoting women's leadership in peace operations, and actively supporting victim-centered initiatives like the UN Trust Fund, Nepal can elevate its role from merely quantitative to one of qualitative and normative influences. This transition would improve protections for host communities and peacekeepers alike, while also bolstering the long-term legitimacy and sustainability of UN peacekeeping amid increased scrutiny and reform.

Recommendation

Based on these analyses, several recommendations emerge:

For the Government of Nepal and its Security Institutions

- ***Develop a comprehensive national policy on SEAH in peacekeeping***
 - Consolidate existing norms, including UN codes, national laws, and WPS commitments, into a clear policy that governs the conduct of all Nepali peacekeepers abroad. This policy should explicitly address SEAH issues concerning both host communities and mission personnel.
- ***Enhance pre-deployment and in-mission training***
 - Expand training programs by incorporating gender equality, SEAH, and victim-centred approaches, featuring scenario-based exercises and case studies from UN reports and academic research.
 - Ensure that all ranks, including senior officers, take part in this training.
- ***Increase women's participation and leadership.***
 - Establish progressive national targets to increase the proportion of women in contingents, police units, staff officer roles, and leadership positions, in line with or exceeding UN parity targets (UNDPO, 2025).
 - Address barriers to recruitment, promotion, and deployment within the Nepal Army, Armed Police Force, and Nepal Police.
- ***Enhance investigation and accountability mechanisms***
 - Set clear procedures for investigating allegations against Nepali peacekeepers, including timelines, victim protection measures, and transparency safeguards.
 - Enhance collaboration with the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and relevant host-state authorities when appropriate.
- ***Support victims and returnees***
 - Provide post-deployment debriefings and psychosocial support to returning peacekeepers, including designated channels for women to report SEAH experienced during missions.
 - Consider making national contributions, whether financial or in-kind, to victim-support mechanisms like the Trust Fund and relevant UN programmes, to demonstrate political commitment.

For the United Nations

- ***Disaggregate and publish data on SEAH***
 - Continue enhancing data collection on SEAH, broken down by mission, gender, and status (civilian, military, police), while ensuring confidentiality (UNDPO, 2025).
- ***Integrate SEAH into policy frameworks concerning peacekeepers***
 - Expand the UN's SEAH framework to systematically address sexual harassment and abuse within missions, in addition to its current focus on SEA against host communities (Donnelly & Mazurana, 2025).
- ***Ensure fairness in financial sanctions and Trust Fund mechanisms***
 - Distribute withheld reimbursements carefully to avoid penalizing victims or hindering TCCs' ability to carry out reforms, particularly in lower-income states.

For academic research and policy discussions

- ***Document the experiences of Nepali women peacekeepers.***
 - Future studies should conduct qualitative interviews with Nepali women peacekeepers and police officers to gain deeper insights into their contributions, challenges, and experiences related to SEAH.
- ***Analyze the politics behind achieving top-contributor status.***
 - Scholars should examine how Nepal's role as the top contributor influences its bargaining position in the UN, its internal civil-military relations, and its policies on gender and accountability.
- ***Assess the impact of the Trust Fund***
 - Empirical research is essential to assess the effectiveness of the Trust Fund in supporting victims and its impact on TCC behavior, including in Nepal.

In sum, Nepal's rise to the top of peacekeeping contributor rankings presents a unique opportunity. By combining its quantitative leadership with robust, gender-responsive policies and genuine involvement in global efforts to combat SEAH, Nepal can move beyond merely supplying troops to becoming a leader that establishes ethical and inclusive peacekeeping standards.

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Buffer States and Continental Security: Nepal in China's South Asian Strategic Calculus



✉ **Binoj Basnyat**

Abstract

China's continental security strategy is shaped by historically embedded concerns over geographic vulnerability, peripheral instability, and regime security rather than by alliance politics or ideological alignment. This article advances a buffer-state framework to explain Beijing's heightened sensitivity toward neighbouring countries, particularly small states bordering politically sensitive regions such as Tibet. It traces this logic to three formative historical experiences: the collapse of the Qing dynasty, the disintegration of the Soviet Union's buffer system, and the strategic repercussions of North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) eastward expansion. Using Nepal as a case study, the article examines how contemporary developments—including Tibet-related security concerns, the Lipulekh territorial dispute, China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and the United States' Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC)—intersect to shape the strategic environment of a Himalayan buffer state amid intensifying great-power competition.

The analysis demonstrates that China seeks to preserve strategic depth through influence, economic integration, and political reassurance rather than formal security commitments. Nepal's significance for Beijing thus lies not in alignment or ideology, but in its capacity to stabilize China's southwestern periphery and insulate sensitive internal frontiers from external pressure. The article contributes to debates on continental security, buffer-state dynamics, and small-state agency in a multipolar regional order characterized by infrastructure rivalry and the externalization of internal security concerns.

Keywords: China, buffer states, Nepal, Tibet, BRI, MCC, South Asia, great-power competition, continental security

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Introduction: Geography as Strategic Memory

Understanding geography is essential to understand the global changes. Amid a world marked by persistent conflicts, trade frictions, climate stress, and technological upheaval, Dr. Parag Khanna, Geopolitical Analyst argues that understanding where events unfold is the most reliable starting point for anticipating the future.ⁱ Khanna said “The truth is that things are not the same everywhere - there are places where youth are revolting. There are places where they’re employed and optimistic. Some places are concerned about AI displacement, not about corrupt governments” (Kenneth SZ Goh, 2026).

Urbanization, agriculture, digitalization, and a soaring need for energy could double the demand for critical minerals by 2040. For many countries, meeting this demand presents a significant opportunity to create jobs and growth (World Bank, 2026).ⁱⁱ But for the competing powers like China, India and the US, it is politics for the reach.

For continental powers, geography is never neutral (Paine, 2025).ⁱⁱⁱ It functions simultaneously as constraint and inheritance—a repository of historical trauma, strategic learning, and institutional memory. In China’s case, geography has repeatedly intersected with episodes of national fragmentation, foreign intrusion, and regime vulnerability, producing a deeply embedded sensitivity toward borders and peripheries. Unlike maritime powers that project influence outward across oceans, China’s strategic gaze has long been oriented inward, toward the management of frontiers and the stabilization of surrounding spaces.

China shares land borders with fourteen states, exposing it to a wide range of political systems, economic conditions, and external alignments. Beijing in addition the other fourteen capitals approach each other inconsistently. Instead, it differentiates among them based on their proximity to politically sensitive regions—most notably Tibet and Xinjiang—and their capability to behave either as protective buffers or as conduits for external influence.

This article advances a central claim: China’s contemporary neighborhood policy is driven less by alliance-building than by the preservation of buffer space. This strategy is historically conditioned and strategically conservative, prioritizing predictability, stability, and insulation over ideological alignment or formal security commitments. Rather than seeking control, Beijing emphasizes influence; rather than military formalization, it favors economic integration and political reassurance (RAND Corporation, 2000).ⁱⁱⁱ

South Asia provides a revealing context in which to examine this logic. Within the region, Nepal occupies a uniquely consequential position. Situated between China and India, bordering Tibet, and increasingly engaged by multiple external actors, Nepal exemplifies the structural dilemmas faced by buffer states amid renewed great-power competition. Through Nepal’s experience, this article explores how historical analogies, contemporary disputes, and competing development initiatives converge to shape China’s continental security strategy (Chand, 2024).

Historical Foundations of China's Buffer-State Logic

Lessons from the Qing Collapse and Peripheral Vulnerability

Modern Chinese strategic thinking is deeply shaped by the experience of the Qing dynasty's decline, during which imperial authority eroded first at the periphery rather than at the core. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, frontier regions such as Tibet, Xinjiang, Mongolia, and Manchuria became zones of foreign influence, economic penetration, and strategic pressure, often without formal conquest (Sahana, 2023).ⁱⁱ

This historical sequence left a lasting imprint on China's strategic culture. The central lesson drawn was that the erosion of buffer zones directly imperils core sovereignty. As peripheral insulation weakened, foreign powers imposed unequal treaties, extracted political and economic concessions, and constrained China's autonomy (Fairbank & Goldman, 2006). Contemporary Chinese historiography treats this period as a cautionary tale, reinforcing the belief that secure borders and stable neighbouring states are essential to regime survival.

Tibet occupies a particularly salient place in this narrative. British expeditions into Tibet in the early twentieth century illustrated how ambiguous borders and porous frontiers could be exploited for strategic access (Goldstein, 1989, 1997). The 1904 Younghusband Expedition to Lhasa demonstrated Britain's capacity to project power into regions China considered within its sphere of influence, revealing the vulnerability created by weak frontier control. Consequently, modern Chinese policy toward Tibet emphasizes not only internal control but also external insulation. Infrastructure development, surveillance, and political oversight are designed to prevent neighbouring states from becoming channels for foreign political, ideological, or security influence—reflecting an enduring buffer-state logic rooted in historical experience (Sperling, 2004).

The Soviet Experience and the Limits of Buffer Control

Chinese strategic analysts have extensively examined the Soviet Union's post-war buffer system in Eastern Europe as a critical case of both strategic success and failure (Wang, 2011). Initially, these states provided Moscow with significant strategic depth, delaying direct confrontation with NATO and insulating the Soviet core from external military pressure. For several decades, this buffer arrangement appeared to reinforce Soviet security.

However, by the late 1980s, the political autonomy and external reorientation of these buffer states eroded Soviet influence and ultimately compressed its strategic space. In Chinese strategic discourse, the collapse of the Soviet Union is often interpreted less as an ideological failure than as a geopolitical one (Shambaugh, 2013). Official Chinese assessments emphasize how the "loss of the socialist camp" in Eastern Europe eliminated the strategic buffer that had protected Soviet territory and accelerated Moscow's sense of encirclement (Zhang & Li, 2012). The gradual drift of Eastern European states toward Western institutions dismantled the buffer system that had underpinned Soviet security.

For Beijing, the Soviet experience underscores a central lesson: buffer states must remain strategically aligned or at least reliably neutral to preserve core security. Coercion

alone is viewed as insufficient and ultimately counterproductive (Zhao, 2016). Instead, Chinese strategists emphasize the importance of stability, economic integration, and political legitimacy in neighbouring states as prerequisites for effective and sustainable insulation. This interpretation has informed China's preference for influence without formal control and integration without overt domination in its contemporary neighbourhood policy (Wang, 2016; Swaine, 2015).

NATO Expansion and Contemporary Lessons

China's strategic discourse frequently invokes NATO's post-Cold War expansion as a contemporary validation of buffer-state logic (Zhao, 2019). The eastward enlargement of the alliance is cited as evidence of how the incorporation of peripheral states into a rival security bloc can intensify strategic pressure on a great power and compress its strategic depth (Mearsheimer, 2014; Li, 2016). From Beijing's perspective, this process helps explain Russia's security anxieties and the deterioration of the European security order.

Chinese scholars and policy analysts have written extensively on NATO expansion as a case study in strategic encirclement. Li Ziguo (2016) argues that the absorption of former Warsaw Pact states into NATO eliminated Russia's buffer zone and created conditions for perpetual insecurity. Similarly, Zhao Huasheng (2019) emphasizes that great powers consistently react negatively when buffer spaces are compressed, regardless of whether neighbouring states join rival alliances voluntarily or under coercion.

While China does not endorse Russia's actions in Ukraine, official statements and academic analyses interpret the conflict as a cautionary example of how buffer erosion can provoke destabilizing reactions (Fu, 2022). Chinese analysts emphasize that great powers tend to respond forcefully when surrounding spaces are absorbed by hostile or competing strategic structures, regardless of normative arguments about sovereignty or voluntary alignment.

This lesson reinforces a core assumption in China's security thinking: neighbouring states must not become platforms for rival military, political, or strategic influence. Consequently, Beijing's neighbourhood policy seeks to discourage alliance entanglements near its borders while favouring neutrality, economic interdependence, and political reassurance as means of preserving strategic depth without direct confrontation (Swaine, 2015; Wang, 2016).

South Asia in China's Continental Security Calculus

Tibet as an Internal-External Security Nexus

South Asia's strategic relevance to China is inseparable from Tibet's dual role as both an internal administrative region and a geopolitical hinge. The Himalayan frontier does not merely demarcate sovereign boundaries; it directly links China's domestic stability to external political and security dynamics. Unlike the eastern seaboard, where maritime distance provides a natural buffer, China's southwestern frontier is porous and immediate, heightening sensitivity to developments beyond its borders.

Chinese security policy explicitly treats Tibet as what Fravel (2008) terms a “vulnerable frontier”- a region where domestic control and external security concerns merge. Political unrest, refugee movements, and foreign engagement in Tibet-adjacent states are therefore assessed through an integrated internal–external security lens (Sperling, 2004; McGranahan, 2010). This convergence distinguishes China’s continental strategy from that of many other powers. Stability in neighbouring countries is valued not only for diplomatic reasons, but as a critical mechanism for insulating sensitive internal regions from transnational political, ideological, and security pressures.

India’s Strategic Interests and the Dual-Buffer Dynamic

Nepal’s buffer status is shaped not only by Chinese concerns but also by India’s historical strategic priorities. Since the mid-twentieth century, Indian security policy has regarded Nepal as essential to its northern defence perimeter, particularly in relation to Tibet (Garver, 2001; Stobdan, 2015). Following China’s assertion of control over Tibet in 1950-51 and the 1962 Sino-Indian border war, India has sought to maintain predominant influence in Nepal as a means of preventing Chinese strategic presence south of the Himalayas.

The 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship between India and Nepal formalized this relationship, granting Indian citizens special rights in Nepal and establishing a framework for close security cooperation (Rose, 1971). For decades, India maintained an effective monopoly over Nepal’s external security orientation through a combination of economic integration, defence ties, and political influence in Kathmandu’s domestic affairs (Muni, 2016).

This creates a dual-buffer dynamic: Nepal functions as a buffer for both China (protecting Tibet) and India (insulating its northern frontier). However, the two powers conceptualize Nepal’s buffer role differently. For India, Nepal’s alignment with New Delhi is essential to maintaining strategic depth; for China, Nepal’s neutrality and restraint on Tibet-related issues suffice. This asymmetry shapes the competitive dynamics that increasingly define Nepal’s external environment.

India’s sensitivity to Chinese engagement in Nepal has intensified in recent years. Infrastructure projects, political visits, and security cooperation are scrutinized for signs that Nepal might be drifting from its traditional alignment with India (Pattanaik, 2020). From New Delhi’s perspective, any significant shift in Nepal’s orientation represents not merely a diplomatic setback but a potential strategic vulnerability along a sensitive frontier (Stobdan, 2015).

Nepal’s Structural Importance in China’s Strategy

Within this framework, Nepal occupies a structurally significant position despite its limited material capabilities. Its 1,414-kilometer border with Tibet, combined with historical, cultural, and religious linkages, makes it a consequential actor in China’s southwestern security environment (Garver, 2001). For Beijing, Nepal is neither a formal ally nor a peripheral concern; it functions as a functional buffer whose orientation directly affects China’s internal security calculus.

China's expectations of Nepal are pragmatic rather than ideological. Beijing prioritizes political stability, effective management of Tibet-related activism, and restraint in hosting external security actors that could erode China's strategic depth (Scobell et al., 2018). Official Chinese statements consistently emphasize respect for Nepal's sovereignty while simultaneously signalling clear preferences regarding Tibet policy and external alignments (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, 2019).

This logic explains China's preference for economic engagement, political dialogue, and limited security cooperation over formal alliance commitments, reflecting a broader buffer-state approach to managing its continental periphery. Unlike Cold War-era alliance politics, China seeks to shape Nepal's behaviour through positive inducements rather than binding commitments (Swaine, 2015; Small, 2015).

The Belt and Road Initiative and Strategic Integration

China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) constitutes the most expansive instrument of its contemporary neighbourhood policy, blending economic development with strategic integration. For Nepal, engagement with the BRI reflects both material necessity and geopolitical calculation. Chronic infrastructure deficits, landlocked geography, and heavy reliance on southern transit routes have made Chinese-led connectivity projects particularly appealing (Ghimiray, 2019).

In 2017, Nepal formally joined the BRI, and subsequent agreements have identified priority projects spanning transportation, energy, and communications infrastructure (Bhattarai & Karki, 2024). These include upgrades to the Rasuwagadhi-Kathmandu Road corridor, feasibility studies for a cross-border railway linking Kathmandu with Gyirong in Tibet, and potential energy transmission interconnections (Nepal & China, 2024). As of 2024, ten specific projects have been identified for execution, including transportation corridors, hydropower development, and cross-border optical fibre networks (Giri, 2024).

The proposed Kathmandu-Gyirong railway project exemplifies the strategic dimensions of BRI infrastructure. If completed, it would represent Nepal's first direct rail link to China, significantly reducing transportation costs and transit times while diversifying Nepal's external connectivity beyond Indian transit routes (Pandey, 2023). However, the project faces substantial technical and financial challenges, including difficult Himalayan terrain, high construction costs estimated at over \$2.7 billion, and questions regarding economic viability (Gracie, Carrie. (2024).

From China's perspective, economic interdependence reinforces buffer stability: states embedded in shared infrastructure and trade networks are less likely to gravitate toward rival strategic alignments (Swaine, 2015). BRI projects in Nepal serve multiple objectives simultaneously—facilitating trade, enhancing connectivity to South Asia, demonstrating China's capacity as a development partner, and strengthening ties with a state bordering Tibet (Small, 2015; Scobell et al., 2018).

For Nepal, however, BRI engagement entails trade-offs. While Chinese investment offers opportunities for diversification and growth, it also raises concerns regarding debt sustainability, project implementation delays, and long-term strategic autonomy (Malik et al., 2021). Nepal's limited absorption capacity and governance challenges have resulted in slow implementation of several BRI projects, complicating efforts to convert agreements into operational infrastructure Bhattarai, (2019).

The central challenge for Kathmandu lies in extracting developmental benefits without compromising policy independence or becoming strategically overexposed. This requires transparent project evaluation, sustainable financing mechanisms, and maintenance of diversified external partnerships to avoid excessive dependence on any single power (Pandey, 2023).

The Millennium Challenge Corporation and Strategic Diversification

The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) compact with Nepal represents an alternative model of external engagement, emphasizing electricity transmission and road infrastructure under the of development assistance. The \$500 million grant, signed in 2017 and ratified by Nepal's parliament in 2022 after intense domestic debate, focuses on constructing a high-voltage transmission line and upgrading road corridors to facilitate trade and energy distribution (Millennium Challenge Corporation, 2017; Adhikari, 2022).

Although formally structured as development aid with no explicit security provisions, the MCC compact acquired significant political and strategic dimensions within Nepal's domestic discourse (Bhattarai, 2022). Critics raised concerns about provisions related to intellectual property protection, auditing arrangements, and the compact's relationship to broader U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy. Supporters emphasized the grant nature of the funding, infrastructure benefits, and Nepal's sovereign right to engage with multiple development partners (Karki, 2022).

From China's perspective, US development programs in Nepal are assessed less on their specific content than on their strategic implications and cumulative trajectory. Official Chinese statements have generally avoided direct criticism of the MCC, instead emphasizing general principles about respecting Nepal's sovereignty and avoiding external interference (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, 2022). However, Chinese state media commentary and academic analyses have questioned whether such programs serve broader strategic objectives related to containing China's influence (Global Times, 2022).

The strategic issue for Beijing is not individual infrastructure projects but whether sustained engagement by external powers gradually erodes China's strategic depth or transforms buffer states into platforms for rival influence. This concern is heightened when development initiatives occur alongside expanded defence cooperation, intelligence sharing, or political coordination mechanisms that could limit China's freedom of action regarding sensitive issues like Tibet (Panda, 2022).

For Nepal, engagement with the MCC reflects an active buffer strategy aimed at diversifying external partnerships and preserving autonomy. By balancing Chinese, Indian, and US involvement, Kathmandu seeks to reduce dependence on any single actor (Dahal, 2022). The prolonged domestic debate preceding MCC ratification demonstrated the political sensitivity of managing competing external relationships and the domestic contestation that arises when buffer states navigate great-power competition.

Yet diversification also invites heightened scrutiny and pressure from multiple directions, underscoring the persistent dilemma faced by buffer states attempting to navigate competing strategic interests without forfeiting independence. Nepal's experience suggests that even ostensibly non-security development programs acquire strategic significance in environments characterized by intensifying rivalry, limiting the space for purely technical or economic engagement (Verma, 2025).

Tibet, Refugees, and the Externalization of Internal Security

Nepal hosts one of the largest Tibetan refugee communities outside India, with an estimated 20,000 Tibetans residing in Nepal, including long-term settlers and recent arrivals (UNHCR, 2023). Historically, Nepal served as a transit corridor for Tibetans seeking refuge in India, particularly following major political events in Tibet. However, Nepal's policies toward Tibetan refugees have tightened significantly over the past two decades, reflecting both domestic political shifts and enhanced coordination with Chinese authorities (Human Rights Watch, 2014).

Nepal's tightening of restrictions illustrates how buffer states can become functional extensions of a larger power's internal security framework. Cooperation with Chinese authorities in border management and refugee control reflects Kathmandu's sensitivity to Beijing's priorities, particularly given Nepal's geographic proximity to Tibet and its dependence on external economic and political support (McConnell, 2016). Chinese officials have explicitly praised Nepal's stance on Tibet-related issues in bilateral meetings and official statements (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, 2019).

Recent developments further illustrate this dynamic. A 2025 investigation revealed how Chinese surveillance technology and coordination with Nepali authorities has intensified monitoring of Tibetan refugees, including biometric data collection and enhanced border controls designed to prevent unauthorized crossings (AP News, 2025). This externalization of surveillance infrastructure represents a deepening of security cooperation that extends China's internal control mechanisms into neighbouring states.

This dynamic highlights the structural asymmetry inherent in buffer relationships. While Nepal retains formal sovereignty, its policy autonomy is constrained by the security imperatives of a more powerful neighbour. Buffer status thus confers strategic relevance but also imposes limitations, as domestic policy choices become intertwined with the internal security concerns of the core state. Nepal's position reflects a calculated judgment that cooperation with China on Tibet-related issues is necessary to maintain broader bilateral relations and avoid antagonizing a powerful neighbour whose economic and political support has grown increasingly important.

Conclusion: The Paradox of Buffer Sovereignty

China's approach to Nepal exemplifies a historically informed and strategically cautious mindset. Lessons from the Qing collapse, the erosion of Soviet buffers, and NATO expansion reinforce Beijing's conviction that instability at the periphery directly threatens central security. Nepal's geography confers strategic relevance, yet this status also constrains its autonomy, illustrating the inherent tension of buffer-state existence.

For small states like Nepal, being a buffer entails both leverage and vulnerability. Strategic agency requires transforming this positional reality into proactive policy through transparent diplomacy, diversified external engagement, and clearly defined limits on alignment. Buffer status is not a passive condition to be endured—it is an arena for disciplined management that reconciles domestic priorities with the imperatives imposed by more powerful neighbours.

Nepal's experience highlights broader principles in contemporary great-power politics. First, buffer states remain strategically significant even in an era of globalization and long-range military capabilities. Proximity to sensitive regions continues to generate security externalities that larger powers seek to manage through economic integration, political influence, and security cooperation rather than formal territorial control.

Second, the dual-buffer dynamic between China and India creates distinctive challenges for Nepal. Unlike Cold War buffers that primarily separated two rival blocs, Nepal must navigate asymmetric expectations from neighbours with different conceptions of what buffer status requires. This necessitates more sophisticated diplomatic strategies than simple neutrality or equidistance.

Third, infrastructure and development programs increasingly serve as instruments of strategic competition, blurring boundaries between economic and security domains. For buffer states, this means that technical decisions about connectivity, energy, and trade routes acquire geopolitical significance that constrains policy choices and invites external scrutiny.

Comparative analysis suggests that Nepal's experience shares features with other buffer states in China's periphery. Mongolia, for instance, has pursued a "third neighbour" policy to diversify external relationships while managing proximity to both China and Russia (Graceffo, 2024). Myanmar's ethnic border regions present similar challenges of internal-external security linkages that shape Chinese engagement (Sun, 2017). Kazakhstan and other Central Asian states navigate Russian and Chinese influence through economic integration balanced against political autonomy (Cooley, 2019).

These cases suggest that buffer-state strategies share common elements—diversification of partnerships, economic engagement with multiple powers, cultivation of international legitimacy, and careful management of sensitive issues that trigger core security concerns of neighbouring great powers. However, the specific constraints and opportunities vary based on geography, domestic capacity, and the intensity of great-power competition in each region.

Nepal's experience ultimately highlights a fundamental tension in contemporary international politics: buffer states survive not through invisibility or deference alone, but through calibrated engagement that acknowledges historical lessons, geographic realities, and the structural limits of small-state agency in an era of intensifying strategic competition. Success requires converting positional vulnerability into diplomatic leverage while maintaining the domestic cohesion and institutional capacity necessary to preserve meaningful autonomy.

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A New Era of Civil-Military Relations: Challenges and Opportunities brought by Youth Movements



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Abstract

Civil–military relations comprise both the interaction between civilian authorities and the military, along with the mechanisms that uphold civilian accountability over the armed forces. These relations are fundamental to ensuring political stability, reinforcing institutional legitimacy, and safeguarding the national security. This research is guided by Huntington’s theoretical framework tracing the historical development of Nepal’s civil–military relations with a particular focus on the Gen-Z Movement and the role of Nepalese Army in the formation of an interim government. The analysis highlights the shifts between objective and subjective civilian control across various political regimes and explores how military involvement during transitional phases can both weaken and reinforce the democratic principles. This study adopts a qualitative and descriptive approach to analyze the evolving patterns of civil–military relations in Nepal. Empirical evidence from recent political events and natural hazards demonstrate that Army’s active involvement in governance, disaster management, and public service strengthens the institutional credibility and public trust. The study further emphasizes the importance of transparency, civic education, and media engagement in developing informed citizen–military interactions. These findings offer valuable insights for understanding civil–military cooperation in transitional societies, highlighting the delicate balance between military influence and democratic stabilization.

Keywords: civil–military relations, Nepali Army, Gen-Z Movement, interim government, democratic governance

Introduction

Nepal has experienced a notable political transformations over the decades followed by the periods of panchyat dissolution, monarchy, to recent youth-led movements. Among these, the 2025 Gen-Z movement depicts a critical phase manifesting the expectations and frustrations of new generation towards government and political parties. To a large extent, the dissatisfaction of younger citizens spoiled in the street which was the response to

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government corruption, restrictions on social media, and the failure of traditional political institutions to address citizens's aspirations (The Guardian, 2025). Within a short while, the protest gathered a wide a mass participation exerting pressure to the then government, compelling security forces, especially the Nepali Army to negotiate the complex and sensitive state of affairs. Through this rebellion, Gen-z highlights the evolving expectations of Nepalese citizens regarding transparency, accountability, and civic engagement.

The involvement of the Nepali Army during the Gen-Z movement exhibits the pivotal nature of civil-military relations as defined by Huntington, 1957 as the interaction between the military institutions and civilian authorities along with the mechanisms of civilian accountability over armed forces. Snider, 1999 explores the impact of social transformation and generational change on military professionalism. The emerging values of younger generations particularly on transparency, inclusiveness, and social responsibility are redefining the ethical foundations of the military challenging conventional military frameworks.

Historically, Nepal's civil-military relations have undergone through the periods of both objective civilian control where the military is professional, separate from politics and auxillary to legal civilian authority and subjective civilian control where civilians authority exert direct control over the military for partisan interests (Dixit, 2025).

During the Gen-z movement, the Nepali Army dealt with dual challenge of maintaining public order as well as preserving constitutional norms and democratic integrity. It highlights the delicate balance required in contemporary civil-military relations. Empirical observation indicates that the Nepali Army played a proactive role in mitigating violence, coordinating with civil authorities, and facilitating in establishing the interim government. This period led to the appointment of Sushila Karki as an interim Prime Minister of Nepal on September 12, 2025, with the army acting in a supporting role (Le Monde, 2025). Though some critics raised concerns about the military's involvement in political processes, the majority of analyses suggest that army involvement helped prevent further possible worsening situations, and maintained the stability of the state (Barakoti, 2020). This context reflects the importance of military conduct, respect for constitutional orders, and participatory governance in strengthening democratic norms in transformed societies.

The youth-led protests intensified demands of informed civil-military interactions, where military institutions are expected not only to enforce order but also to uphold fundamental rights and democratic principles. The Nepali Army's coordination with civil authorities and its less engagement in political facilitation reflects a nuanced understanding of its institutional role. It safeguards the national security while maintaining subordination to civilian authority (Dixit, 2025; Huntington, 1957). Such a model legitimizes the military order, builds public trust, and contributes to broader societal resilience.

Moreover, the Gen-Z movement highlights the role of media, civic education, and transparency in fostering responsible civil-military relations. Kurpius, 2012 explores how youth movements leverage digital media to mobilize social and political change. His findings

highlight that these movements create new forms of civic participation that influence institutional behavior, including military. Open dialogue among citizens, media outlets, and military bodies are vital for preventing misinformation, reducing tensions, and enhancing accountability. The army's careful approach during widespread protests and its support for interim governance mechanisms reflect a strong commitment to democratic principles. This shows that military involvement does not inherently weaken the civilian authority, but can strengthen the institutional trust when carried out within the constitutional and legal frameworks.

As a whole, an analysis of the Nepali Army's involvement in the 2025 Gen-Z movement provides crucial insights on how citizen expectations, military professionalism, and political authority intersect during the protest. The role of army highlights the potential for military institutions to serve as stabilizing forces without compromising democratic norms. Scholars suggest that youth movements, which was the manifestations of active citizenship, have the potential to serve as collaborators rather than opponents in fostering democratic and participatory cultures (Cottey, Edmunds, & Forster, 2002). Particularly, this stability depends on strong constitutional oversight, professional ethics, and a commitment to non-partisanship. Nepal's recent experience highlights that civil-military relations rely on the legitimacy of both civilian leadership and military institutions, ensuring that national security objectives are pursued within a democratic framework, fostering trust between the state and its citizens.

In particular, the Gen-Z movement emphasizes the importance of balancing active military engagement with constitutional limits along with encouraging informed public participation to strengthen the democracy, human rights, and ensure the credibility of state institutions (The Guardian, 2025; Reuters, 2025). By integrating historical insights with contemporary experiences, Nepal's civil-military framework provides a potential model for other post-conflict states facing with the challenges of youth-led activism, political instability, and the evolving role of the military. Thus, this highlights that civil-military relations are not only for maintaining national security but also for fostering trust, accountability, and active participation in governance.

Literature Review/Theoretical Base

The study of civil-military relations has been a central concern in political science, especially in understanding how states maintain a balance between civilian authority and military conducts. In evolving democracy, this relationship are important for stable political system, institutional legitimacy, and public trust. Huntington (1957) provides the foundational framework for analyzing civil-military relations.

Huntington's theoretical frameworks are particularly relevant in context of Nepal. Huntington distinguishes between **objective civilian control**, which emphasizes military professionalism and autonomy under civilian oversight, and **subjective control**, where political leaders directly influence the military for partisan ends. He argues that stable democracy depends on maintaining professional autonomy within constitutional bodies avoiding politicization of the armed forces.

Historically, the relationship between the state and the military has been reflected by political changes from the Rana regime to the establishment of republican nation. Under the autocratic Rana regime, the Army primarily served the ruling elite, and limited its engagement with citizens. During the monarchical period, the Nepal Army was loyal and primarily directed by the king. After the abolition of the monarchy and after the restoration of democracy, the Nepali Army redefined its social role. The promulgation of the 2015 Constitution, the Army was redefined as a national and professional institution serving the nation developing harmony with the citizens (Baral, 2012). This demonstrates that the Army's role is not confined to defense and control, but in social inclusion and the building of public trust.

In the similar manner, Nepali scholars highlights the progressive role of Nepali army in civil-military relations. Upreti, Sharma, Pyakuryal, and Ghimire (2010) emphasize that Nepal's peace process required coordinated efforts among civil society, state institutions, and security forces. Their work illustrates the gradual shifts of Nepali army from traditional coercive role to a active participation in peace building and development redefining its relationship with civilians.

Finer, 1962 provides another critical framework, arguing that military involvement in politics is often a result of weak civilian institutions rather than the inherent ambitions of the armed forces. When political leadership are incapable of governing the state, the military often emerges as a balancing force. This perspective is closely related with Nepal during the Gen-Z Movement of 2025. The widespread youth-led protests against corruption, political instability, and inequality pushed the country into a state of uncertainty (Reuters, 2025). As civilian leadership weakened, the Nepal Army played a stabilizing role helping prevent further crisis and assist in the formation of an interim government within constitutional boundaries (Le Monde, 2025).

Expanding the Huntington's ideas, Janowitz, 1960 conceptualizes the modern military as a "constabulary force" that is not just a mechanism of warfare but an institution dedicated to national development and maintaining social stability. Janowitz's framework illustrates the evolving role of the Nepal Army, which has been progressively involve in disaster relief, reconstruction, and civic engagement (Thapa, 2023). During the Gen-Z Movement, the Army's action and priorities on public safety reflected its growing emphasis on professionalism and societal service rather than coercive control (The Guardian, 2025).

A key aspect of civil-military relations in Nepal also lies in constitutional accountability. Article 267 of Constitution of Nepal, 2015 has the provisions relating to Nepal Army, mentions that Nepal Army under the authority of the President, implement the policy directed through the Council of Ministers. However, in practice, effective civilian control remains insufficient due to political fragmentation, party favoritism, and lack of policy expertise (Bhattarai, 2021). The Gen-Z protests reenergized public debate over whether the Nepal Army's limited intervention during political deadlock represented constitutional guardianship or subtle overreach.

Theoretically, civil–military relations can be analyzed in through three levels i.e. institutional, behavioral, and societal (Croissant & Kuehn, 2018). The institutional aspect focus on the structures, roles, and overall oversights between the military and the state, the behavioral level explores the action and interaction patterns between civilian and military leaders and the societal dimension shows the relationship between the military and the broader society. In Nepal, all three dimensions are in the process of gradual transformation. Although the professional credibility of Army has strengthened, political leaders still regard it as a potential political power instead of an apolitical national body (Dixit, 2025).

The transformation of military institutions in Asian democracies, noting a shift toward professionalism and depoliticization influenced by civic activism and generational change (Alagappa, 2001). Youth movements, in this context, act as drivers of democratic consolidation that pressure the military to redefine its social role. Comparative studies across South Asian countries like Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Myanmar illustrate how civil-military relations can either institutionalize or derail democratic norms. In contrast to these situations, Nepal represents a developing model in which the military avoids the direct political intervention but maintains considerable constitutional influence. Some scholars describe this framework as the “Nepali Model of Democratic Militarism”, that represents professionalism and institutional accountability in the military. This seeks to preserve national stability ensuring civilian sovereignty. Despite its transformation, the practical and institutional challenges yet remain in ensuring the effective civilian oversight.

While applying Huntington’s, Finer’s, and Janowitz’s theories to Nepal, reveals that civil-military relations are not inherently hostile instead they can be mutually supportive when grounded in transparency, constitutional norms, and public trust. The Gen-Z Movement demonstrates that when the military acts as a constitutional stabilizer rather than a partisan force, it enhances both institutional credibility and democratic resilience. In transforming societies like Nepal, the civil-military balance is essential for safeguarding the national security as well as strengthening the democratic institutions.

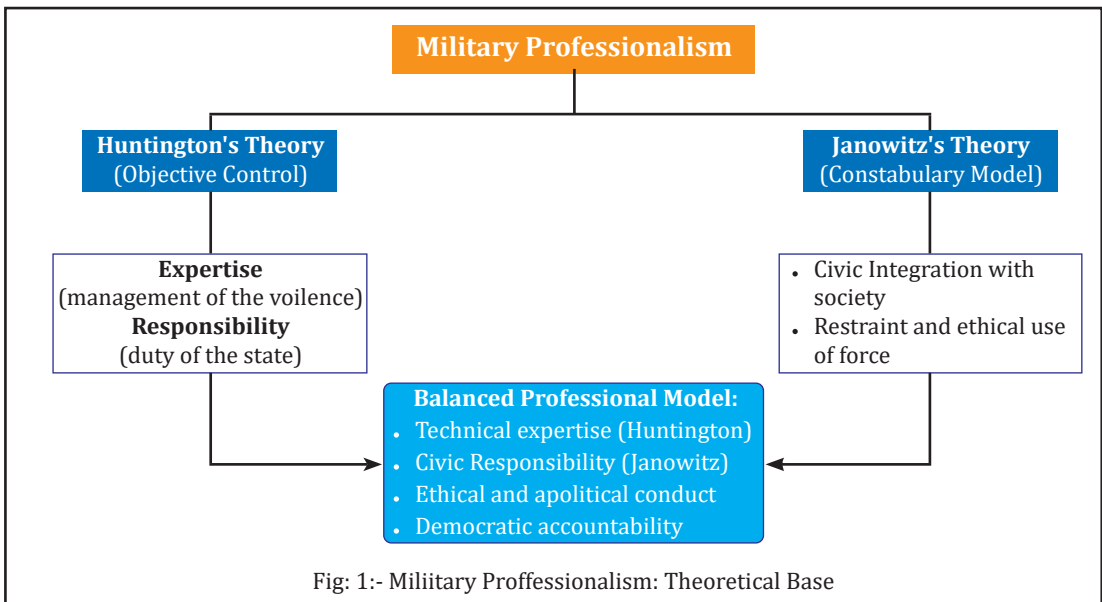
Theoretical Base

The conceptual frameworks of Huntington and Janowitz regarding military professionalism are essential for understanding the challenges and opportunities brought by youth movements in contemporary civil–military relations. According to Huntington’s objective control theory, military conducts and civilian supremacy are maintained when the military is politically neutral, autonomous in professional matters, and fully subordinate to civilian authority. In contrast, Janowitz’s constabulary model posits that in modern democratic societies, the military must be closely integrated with civilian values and social institutions, acting not as a separate or isolated force but as a “constabulary force” that emphasizes civic responsibility, ethical conduct, and self-restraint. The youth-led movements challenge the Nepali Army to deal with both risks of politicization or misuse of force, and opportunities to enhance accountability, and legitimate democracy. The integration of Huntington’s ideal

of military autonomy and Janowitz’s civic integration reveals that effective modern military professionalism can be maintain while balancing technical expertise and institutional discipline with ethical responsibility. This fosters stable, accountable, and democratically aligned civil-military relations.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative and descriptive approach to analyze the evolving patterns of civil–military relations in Nepal. It particularly focuses on the Nepali Army’s involvement during the Gen-Z movement and its role on the formation of an interim government. The research is grounded in Huntington’s (1957) concept of objective civilian control and Janowitz’s (1960) theory of military professionalism. This together provide a theoretical lens to assess the balance between military conduct and democratic mechanism.



The study relies on secondary sources including scholarly articles, official documents of the Nepali Army, government reports, and credible media coverage. Data related to recent political protests, army responses, and public perceptions are reviewed to maintain the institutional accountability, transparency, and trust between the civilian leadership and the military.

A thematic analysis method is applied to identify the patterns of control, legitimacy, and institutional adaptation of Nepali Army in Nepal’s post-conflict democratic transition. This perspective illustrates how military involvement in governance, disaster management, and public communication reflects broader transformations in civil–military relations. Ethical considerations are maintained by using verifiable, and publicly available data, citing all the references accurately.

Analysis and Discussion

The civil-military relationship in Nepal is both complex and historically contingent, reflecting the country's distinctive political journey, including periods of monarchy, revolutionary movements, armed conflict, and multiple constitutional reforms. Since the establishment of modern Nepal, the Nepali Army has served both as a protector of national security and shaped the political dynamics.

During the Rana periods and monarchy-led period, the Army primarily uphold the central authority, protect the regime and suppress political opposition (Baral, 2012). This historical legacy solidified the perception of the military as both guardian and political mediator, establishing a dual role that continues to influence contemporary civil-military interactions. The 2006 Comprehensive Peace Agreement marked Nepal's transition to democratic governance that introduced both opportunities and challenges for civil-military relations.

The army redefine its role in disarmament of the Maoist forces, formation of the paramilitary structures, and establishment of the republican institutions positioning within a constitutional framework prioritizing civilian supremacy (Bhattarai, 2021). Although the constitution guarantees the parliamentary oversight of defense institutions, its implementation has remained inconsistent, reflecting systemic governance weaknesses, political fragmentation, and unstable executive leadership. These factors have periodically transformed the Army from a strictly professional institution to a de facto stabilizer during political instability, highlighting the ongoing challenges in achieving full civilian supremacy (Thapa, 2022; Croissant & Kuehn, 2018).

The theoretical frameworks of objective civilian control (Huntington, 1957) and military professionalism (Janowitz, 1960) provide critical insights for understanding these dynamics. Huntington's model underscores the separation of policy direction and professional execution, ensuring that the military remains apolitical while exercising operational autonomy. According to Huntington's model, the separation of policy direction and professional execution preserves political neutrality and operational autonomy.

Janowitz emphasizes the integration of military institutions within societal and political norms, highlighting professional ethics, institutional discipline, and social legitimacy as the pillars of stability. During the period of institutional fragility, the civil-military relations in Nepal particularly reveals the recurrent challenges between these theoretical ideals and practical realities. The transitions from royal autocracy to interim governments, and republican structures have repeatedly challenged the delicate balance between civilian oversight and military autonomy (Huntington, 1957; Janowitz, 1960).

The Gen-Z movement of 2025 offers a contemporary perspective to explore these disputes in practice, which was driven by widespread youth frustration over lack of economic growth, corruption, and political unrest (Dixit, 2025; Adhikari, 2024). The movement brought wide range of stakeholders, encompassing students, young professionals, and members of civil society. At the peak of the protests, the Nepali Army deliberately adopted a strategic

caution. It coordinated with civil authorities to maintain order, avoid direct confrontation, and actively communicate to mitigate misperceptions (Khadka, 2025). This conduct reflects the Army's institutional maturity and the growing political neutrality. At the same time, its subtle involvement in mediating dialogues for an interim government has aroused debates about military influence during transitional politics (Reuters, 2025; Le Monde, 2025).

From the perspective of Feaver's (1999) agency theory, these events illuminate the "agency dilemma" in Nepal's civil-military relations characterized by the constant negotiation between civilian oversight and autonomous military action. Political uncertainty, weak parties institutions, and recurrent crises have inadvertently enabled the Army as a stabilizing force, effectively filling governance vacuums. Importantly, this does not signify an authoritarian aspiration but rather reflects structural weaknesses in the implementation of democratic principles such as parliamentary oversight, budgeting transparency, and accountability (Bhattarai, 2021; Thapa, 2022).

The expansion of Army's role beyond the traditional combat roles has broadened the horizon of civil-military relations. Involvement of Army in disaster risk management, infrastructural development, peacekeeping operations, and public service projects has reinforced the institutional legitimacy and civic trust (Thapa, 2023; Cottey et al., 2002). During the Gen-Z protests, the public widely acknowledged the Army's professionalism while at the same time showed dissatisfaction to civilian leadership. This duality highlights the need for a strong and accountable civilian oversight framework to prevent the military from involving into non-security functions.

Digital media and social networks played a pivotal role in shaping public perception and civil-military interactions during the Gen-Z movement. Social media platforms became key arenas for mobilization, information dissemination, and monitoring state institutions (Dixit, 2025; The Guardian, 2025). The Army's strategic engagement through official communication channels limited misinformation, projected institutional calm, and upheld its professional impartiality.

These practices indicate broader trends in post-conflict democratic context, where civic literacy, transparency, and public participation are viewed as integral part for sustaining civilian control and institutional accountability (Cottey et al., 2002; Feaver, 1999).

However, structural and institutional challenges continue to hinder the balanced civil-military relations. Politicization of accountable institutions, limited policy expertise among elected representatives, and a lack of empirical research on security governance create conditions of arbitrary military interventions. Effective democratic system requires not the politicization of the military but its disciplined professionalism and institutional integration within the constitutional boundaries (Huntington, 1957; Janowitz, 1960). The Gen-Z movement illustrates the imbalance between military discipline and weak civilian oversight within the political system.

A sustainable civil-military model for Nepal requires three interdependent pillars: constitutional oversight, military professionalism, and civic engagement. Constitutional

oversight ensures accountability, professional military ethics safeguard the institutional autonomy, and civic engagement fosters public trust and democratic legitimacy (Thapa, 2022, 2023; Bhattarai, 2021). When functioning cooperatively, these pillars foster the citizen-military relationship from skepticism to shared responsibility and mutual confidence.

In comparison, Nepal's experience similar challenges faced by other transitional democratic countries, where military institutions are politicized, must redefine their role in line with emerging democratic expectations (Finer, 1962; Croissant & Kuehn, 2018). Lessons from the Gen-Z movement indicate that proactive civilian oversight, a professional and apolitical military, and digitally literate citizens are inseparable for sustaining democratic resilience.

Consequently, the future democracy of Nepal depends on institutional collaboration, where stability and liberty reinforce rather than undermine each other. Integration of Army within transparent, accountable, and participatory governance structures, help to navigating political instability, addressing societal crises, and upholding constitutional democracy efficiently. The Gen-Z movement demonstrates the importance of strengthening civil-military norms and ensuring professional military conduct. It further emphasizes the need of an informed and engaged public in maintaining democratic stability.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The analysis of civil-military relations in Nepal presents a nuanced and dynamic landscape, influenced by historical legacies, constitutional reforms, and continuous political change. The Nepali Army has historically been positioned at the focal point between state authority and national security. It has played a pivotal role in defending territorial sovereignty and also participating in occasionally political transitions. This functions has induced both public trust and political wariness, crafting a harmonious relationship between military professionalism and civilian oversight. The post-conflict period after the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Agreement has been crucial in redefining the Army's functions, highlighting the importance of military operations with democratic norms and constitutional provisions (Huntington, 1957; Janowitz, 1960).

The Gen-Z movement of 2025 serves as a contemporary lens to examine these phenomenon. The youth-led mobilization against economic frustrations, political stagnation, and corruption not only challenged governance structures but also tested the Nepali Army's commitment to professional neutrality. During the demonstrations, the Army adopted a posture of strategic control, coordinating with civil authorities to manage tensions while avoiding direct confrontation.

Media analyses and policy reports suggest that the Army's response in an unsettled political environment reflected institutional maturity and demonstrating the professional standards (Khadka, 2025; Adhikari, 2024). However, observations regarding the Army's indirect role in facilitating discussions on the formation of an interim government pointed to the delicate balance between military neutrality and underlying political influence.

As described by Feaver (1999), such events reflect the “agency dilemma” in civil–military relations, where military institutions are subordinate to civilian authority while preserving professional autonomy. Weak party structures, political ambiguity, and repeated governance failures in Nepal lead to a condition to function Army as a consolidating force. Importantly, this does not necessarily indicate authoritarian aspirations of Army, rather points out the lapses of civilian accountability and emphasizes on strengthening democratic institutions.

Effective parliamentary vigilance, transparent defense governance, and organized communication channels are crucial to mitigate discretionary decisions and safeguard institutional responsibility. The expansion of the Nepali Army’s involvement beyond the conventional defense functions has also reshaped public perceptions and civil–military interactions. Its active participation in disaster management, peacekeeping, and community infrastructure projects has enhanced the institutional legitimacy and strengthened public trust (Thapa, 2022). However, in the absence of strong civilian frameworks, the demarcation between military service and political engagement continues to blur.

The Gen-Z movement highlighted some dilemmas. Although the public acknowledged the Army’s professionalism and strategy, the concerns remained over the absence of decisive civilian leadership and the transparency in policy making. Digital activism and media scrutiny during the Gen-Z protests introduced additional complexities. Social media platforms amplified public discourse on the Army’s role, highlighting issues of accountability, transparency, and institutional legitimacy. Studies on post-conflict democracies emphasizes that civic literacy, informed public discourse, and effective communication are the key pillars for democratic oversight of the military institutions (Cottey et al., 2002). The Nepali Army’s use of official communication channels to provide timely information during the protests show the importance of proactive engagement with citizens. This helped to mitigate misinformation and foster institutional legitimacy.

Despite notable progress, politicization of civilian bodies, limited policy expertise among elected representatives, and the absence of systematic academic research about security governance create structural vulnerabilities. Ensuring civilian supremacy does not mean interference in military operations but rather respecting professional autonomy while institutionalizing accountability, competence, and discipline (Huntington, 1957). Based on these findings, key recommendations are suggested for strengthening civil–military relations in Nepal:

1. Parliamentary committees and executive oversight mechanisms should be strengthened to ensure effective monitoring of military operations, budget allocations, and crisis management strategies.
2. The rise of the Gen-Z movement shows that youth mobilization reflects broader socio-political sentiment. Rather than suppressing dissent, institutional mechanisms should integrate constructive youth perspectives into policy discussions to reinforce democracy and accountability.

3. Military professionals should ensure that the Army's involvement in disaster response, peacekeeping, and community development remains consistent within the constitutional boundaries.
4. Civic literacy and media engagement should promote public education programs that enhances the understanding of civil–military relations, democratic governance, and institutional responsibilities.
5. There should be transparency in defense governance that establishes independent auditing mechanisms and reporting standards for defense expenditures, operational deployments, and humanitarian initiatives.
6. There should be collaboration with multi-stakeholder that create institutionalized platforms where military leaders, civil authorities, academics that can help in policy formulation, crisis management, and security governance. Such forums can generate constructive dialogue, and mutual accountability.
7. There is a necessity of comparative and policy-oriented research to encourage systematic research on civil–military relations. Evidence-based insights can guide reforms, anticipate potential flashpoints, and strengthen institutional capacity.

In conclusion, Nepal's civil–military relationship is at a pivotal crossroads. The Gen-Z movement revealed that the Nepali Army is capable of controlling the situations, remaining strategically neutral. However, the fragile civilian institutions continue to jeopardize the democratic values. A sustainable civil-military framework depends on the joint action of constitutional bodies, professional military practice and active civic engagement. When these pillars function in harmony, the relationship between citizens and soldiers transforms from wariness to mutual confidence, strengthening both social order and democratic freedoms. The future stability of Nepal's democracy depends on ensuring military integration into a transparent, accountable, and inclusive governance.

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The U.S.–India Civil Nuclear Deal and Lessons for Nepal’s Strategic Diplomacy



✉ Himalaya Thapa

Abstract

*The U.S.–India Civil Nuclear Agreement of 2008 represented a pivotal change in American foreign policy, evolving a historically limited relationship due to non-proliferation issues into a strategic alliance. This agreement was finalized despite India not being a signatory to the Nuclear **Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)**, indicating a significant shift within the global nuclear framework. This paper analyses the political, strategic, and institutional elements that facilitated this agreement, positing that its main motivations were geopolitical and strategic rather than exclusively focused on energy concerns. By examining executive leadership, congressional dynamics, lobbying efforts, business interests, and influences from international institutions, the study illustrates how non-proliferation standards were selectively adjusted to reflect evolving power dynamics (Dahlman & Mackby, 2008). Drawing insights from this case, the paper offers relevant policy recommendations for Nepal’s diplomatic strategy, highlighting the necessity of maintaining a long-term perspective, achieving domestic unity, engaging thoughtfully with international standards, and effectively navigating asymmetrical power relations. The conclusion emphasizes that even smaller nations can enhance their diplomatic presence and promote national interests through consistent and credible engagement aligned strategically with larger powers.*

Keywords: U.S.–India relations, civil nuclear cooperation, strategic partnership, non-proliferation polic, small-state diplomacy, Nepal’s foreign policy, power asymmetry

Introduction

For much of the Cold War, relations between the United States and India were characterized by mistrust, strategic divergence, and limited cooperation. India’s embrace of non-alignment after gaining independence, and its close friendship with the Soviet Union, placed it in opposition to U.S. strategic aims in South Asia. At the same time, security relations with Pakistan during major regional clashes in Washington

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bolstered India's perception that the United States was insensitive toward India's security concerns and regional aspirations (Frankel, 2009). These conditions created a lasting legacy of suspicion that lasted well beyond the Cold War. Nuclear policy was a central source of tension between the countries. India denounced the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1968 because it enshrined a discriminatory world order that divided the planet's nations into permanent nuclear "haves" and "have-nots." Nuclear development thereafter - India's 1974 nuclear test and a series of nuclear tests in 1998 - reaffirmed its marginal role within the global non-proliferation regime, with US and its allies imposing sanctions (Pan & Bajoria, 2008). At the beginning of the century, the two countries seemed locked into an ambivalent relationship shaped more by the principles of restraint and suspicion than a partnership.

The post-Cold War environment of globalization, however, provided new opportunities for strategic realignment. The withdrawal of the Soviet Union forced India to seek new external partnerships, and an era of economic liberalization in the early 1990s had a marked impact on India's link with global markets and international organizations. Diplomatic engagement between Washington and New Delhi swelled in the late-90s and early 2000s, and the United States-India Civil Nuclear Agreement was reached in 2008. It irrevocably altered India's position within the global nuclear order and represents the larger transformation, a phase change, of bilateral relations.

This paper elucidates how the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Deal was possible and what it highlights about the relationship between strategic imperatives and international standards. It also considers in what way the experience provides useful lessons for Nepal's strategic diplomacy as a small state balancing asymmetry of power relations in a complex regional context. The analysis that follows is an open systematic dissection of this understanding, deconstructing the geopolitical factors and strategic considerations animating the U.S.-India deal, and connecting their insights to Nepal by setting out key topics for it: strategic patience, the engagement with international norms and the management of asymmetric power, all of which are essential to Nepal's strategic response to the foreign policy challenges the two countries must tackle.

Historical Background: Nuclear Politics and the Evolution of U.S.-India Relations

Understanding the nuclear deal requires situating it within the longer historical trajectory of nuclear governance and U.S.-India interactions. The post-World War II nuclear order was shaped by a small group of nuclear-armed states seeking to prevent further proliferation while preserving their strategic advantages. The NPT, which entered into force in 1970, became the cornerstone of this order. India's rejection of the treaty stemmed from both normative objections and strategic calculations, particularly concerns about China's nuclear capabilities following the 1964 Chinese nuclear test.

Throughout the Cold War, India pursued a policy of nuclear ambiguity while developing indigenous scientific and technological capabilities. The 1974 nuclear test led the United States and other suppliers to restrict nuclear exports, reinforcing India's self-reliant approach.

The creation of the NSG tightened controls on nuclear commerce, effectively excluding India from global nuclear trade for decades.

The end of the Cold War gradually altered U.S. perceptions. India's democratic system, large market, and growing technological base began to attract American interest. The 1998 nuclear tests initially reversed this trend, but the subsequent Talbott–Singh dialogue laid the groundwork for re-engagement by addressing non-proliferation concerns and strategic stability in South Asia. By the early 2000s, India was increasingly viewed not merely as a proliferation challenge but as a potential strategic partner in shaping Asian security.

What Is the U.S.–India Civil Nuclear Deal?

The U.S.–India Civil Nuclear Deal was not merely a bilateral energy accord; it was a negotiated exception to the prevailing architecture of the global nuclear regime. At its essence, the agreement authorized civil nuclear cooperation between the United States and India despite India's status as a non-signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. For over three decades, such cooperation had been legally and politically impossible under U.S. law and Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) guidelines.

The breakthrough rested on a political trade-off rather than a treaty revision. India did not join the NPT, nor did it dismantle its nuclear weapons program. Instead, it agreed to distinguish formally between civilian and military nuclear facilities and to place designated civilian reactors under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. This separation plan constituted the operational core of the deal: civilian facilities would be internationally monitored, while military facilities would remain outside inspection.

To enable cooperation, the United States undertook the unusual step of amending its own domestic legislation. The Hyde Act of 2006 created a country-specific waiver to the Atomic Energy Act, allowing nuclear trade with India under defined conditions. Subsequently, the bilateral “123 Agreement” established the legal framework governing technology transfer, fuel supply assurances, and termination clauses. At the multilateral level, the NSG granted India a one-time waiver in 2008, effectively normalizing its participation in global nuclear commerce.

In practical terms, the agreement ended India's technological isolation and integrated it—partially but significantly—into the regulated nuclear marketplace. Symbolically, it signalled something larger: a U.S. decision to recognize India as a responsible stakeholder in the nuclear domain without requiring formal adherence to the NPT's traditional categories. The deal therefore represented not a collapse of non-proliferation norms, but a strategic reinterpretation of how they could be applied.

The Strategic and Policy Foundations of the Nuclear Deal

With a clear intent to redefine relations between the United States and India, the George W. Bush administration approached India. Over time, rather than considering India primarily in terms of non-proliferation compliance or as a case of South Asian rivalry, U.S. authorities looked at India as an ascending democratic power whose long-

term strategic interests mostly overlapped with those of the United States (Burns, 2005). This reimagining represented a significant break from past U.S. policy toward India. While India's increasing demand for energy was commonly used as an excuse for the nuclear deal, the issue of energy does not provide the entire strategic significance for the agreement. India's electricity constraints may have been remedied with secondary measures that did not call for a radical amending of U.S. non-proliferation law (Ghoshroy, 2006).

The agreement therefore pointed to deeper geopolitical logic. Strengthening ties with India, from the US perspective, served several strategic ends. These included strengthening counter-terrorism cooperation post-9/11, boosting stability in South Asia and contributing to a favourable balance of power in Asia in the era of China's rapid rise (Pan & Bajoria, 2008). However, India's experience with the world as a nuclear non-contractor was also the factor, so integrating India into the global nuclear economy under security mechanisms was felt to be preferable to continuing isolation, especially against the background of India's nuclear deterrent record and lack of involvement in major proliferation scenarios.

The deal also advanced broader U.S. strategic interests in the region, beyond India's civilian energy needs. As US footprint in the region grew bigger and bigger, policy planners saw closer engagement with India as a way to balance against China's expanding economic and military presence, as well as Russia's rising assertiveness. India, for its part, sought more recognition as an accountable nuclear power and broader public acceptance, all of which improved its international legitimacy and strategic standing on the world stage.

Political and Executive Leadership and Presidential Diplomacy

The success of the nuclear agreement depended on high-level political leadership. The July 18, 2005, joint statement of President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was transformative, as they pledged both governments to engage in full civil nuclear cooperation. This announcement signalled a readiness to transcend deep-seated policy preferences in pursuit of a larger strategic partnership.

The Bush administration spent a large amount of political capital advancing the agreement, casting it consistently as a long-term strategic investment, not a concession on non-proliferation principles (Burns, 2005). President Bush's trip to India in 2006 proved political momentum was a strong indication of the lasting commitment from the president in that role and signified continued executive direction at a vital juncture of negotiations.

Congressional Politics and Restriction

For all of the executive excitement, the US Congress placed greater stress on the nuclear deal. All other state legislators worried that granting India special treatment could damage credibility of the non-proliferation regime and diminish US leverage in other areas of proliferation (Lugar, 2005).

Congressional approval relied on commitments that the agreement would not help fuel India's nuclear weapons program, and that credible safeguards and transparency mechanisms would be put in place. That concern was handled by the Hyde Act of 2006, which revised the Atomic Energy Act to allow nuclear cooperation with India, subject to strict reporting and oversight (United States Congress, 2008).

The India Caucus, then the largest country-focused caucus in the U.S. House of Representatives, made a significant contribution through its advocacy and public messaging as well. Notable members emphasized the need for a "21st-century policy regarding India" that would bolster India's emergence as a responsible global power. Final approval in 2008 embodied bipartisan agreement that the strategic advantages of closer engagement with India outweighed the threats to the status quo, as evidenced by the wide differences in passage between the two chambers surrounding this agreement.

Lobbying, Advocacy, and Diaspora Politics

Congressional perceptions of the nuclear deal were largely moulded by non-state actors. The US-India Political Action Committee, or USINPAC, activated Indian-American communities, coordinated advocacy campaigns, and backed legislators that supported closer bonds between the two countries (USINPAC, n.d.). Members of Congress recognized the impact of these efforts openly, noting that engagement of the diaspora framed the agreement as a fit with democratic values and U.S. strategic interests (Ackerman, 2008). The Government of India similarly obtained business lobbying support from Barbour Griffith & Rogers (BGR Group), using well-embedded former officials to push the compromise through Washington's political system. Strategic arguments in favour of the nuclear deal were reinforced by commercial considerations.

Business-related organizations like the U.S.-India Business Council emphasized the economic value of wider proliferation of nuclear, defence and high-technology commerce (USIBC, 2005). The U.S. corporations expected major opportunities in India's aviation, defence and energy (Rai, 2007). The first question is: Would the deal have come to fruition without these commercial lobbies? If the commercial lobbies had not been able to ramp the engine of the deal over this short period of time it can hardly have been that fast, or has it undergone all kinds of legislative hurdles. As much as financial incentives were crucial, it is unlikely policy makers would have seen a less compelling mix of economic and strategic interests as the business interests led by this group of businessmen likely pushed out the process sooner or later. Therefore, I would say, there must have been a kind of symbiosis between strategic and commercial rationales that played an important role in getting bipartisan support behind the agreement.

International Organizations and the Negotiation Process

The institutional road to the nuclear deal involved manoeuvring through complicated inter-governmental structures. The 123 Agreement, which was finalized in 2007, set down the legal framework for cooperation and underlined India's decision to separate civilian and military nuclear facilities and to subject designated reactors to International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards.

Approval by the IAEA and a waiver by the Nuclear Suppliers Group in 2008 signalled the first significant transformations in global nuclear governance. Such developments showed how domestic international regimes could be recalibrated by sustained and productive diplomatic efforts and strategic convergence.

On September 27, 2008, the U.S. House of Representatives approved the accord, whilst the Senate ratified it on October 1, 2008, and President Bush signed the agreement as law on October 8, 2008.

Implications for Global Non-proliferation Governance

The U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Agreement produced controversy surrounding the future direction of the non-proliferation regime. Critics claimed that it weakened the normative underpinning of the NPT by rewarding a non-signatory state, and that it hampered enforcement elsewhere (Ghoshroy, 2006).

Its defenders contended that the agreement reflected pragmatic adjustment rather than weakening, absorbing India under certain conditions and strengthening its responsible nuclear conduct (Frankel, 2009). This article thus demonstrates, that the paradox of international governance always resides between universal norms and strategic flexibility.

Lessons for Nepal's Strategic Diplomacy

The U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Agreement is illuminating about strategic diplomacy and offers important lessons for Nepal, including how states functioning under conditions of asymmetric power can enlarge the international diplomatic environment through long-term vision, institutional coherence, and calibrated engagement with international norms. Nepal's geopolitical frame could not be more different from that of India; the strategic logic beneath remains profoundly relevant for a small state sandwiched between great powers.

One lesson has been the value of strategic patience with respect to long-term national goals. India moved toward both recognition and strategic partnership piecemeal over the decades, adopting key policy positions withstood sanctions, diplomatic isolation and domestic leadership changes. This, of course, is something that is quite pertinent to Nepal, which highlights the importance of setting such lasting foreign policy priorities — things like economic transformation, energy security, peacekeeping leadership and regional stability — and following them across electoral cycles.

No less instructive is India's willingness to engage international norms through a negotiated process, while not bound by them. Instead of outright opposing the nuclear order the world over, India participated in the global nuclear order only for a specified period while also making its argument for normative reforms. Nepal can do a similar in embracing principles like non-alignment and multilateralism as strategic assets to build on, contrasting normative commitment with pragmatic flexibility.

Second, the case illustrates how states can manage asymmetric power relationships using strategic positioning rather than reactive balancing. Nepal would benefit from adopting an issue-based approach by recognizing areas of strategic value that its cooperation provides, such as peacekeeping operations, election security, disaster response coordination, Himalayan environmental stewardship — the region plays a critical role, the region is essential for environmental management and governance — and facilitating regional transit.

One particularly practical lesson relates to the sequencing of diplomacy and commitments. India poured years into establishing confidence and a national agenda before signing binding deals. Nepal has, at its junctures, resorted to negotiating earlier attempts to generate goodwill, and changing direction and making the energy sector a priority development agenda may improve Nepal's bargaining position over issues like infrastructure, energy and security cooperation (Parajuli, 2024).

Continuity of institutions and diplomatic professionalism are also decisive aspects. Bolstering Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, protecting major diplomatic posts from political instability and ensuring that strategic priorities are not lost would strengthen negotiating credibility.

So, finally, the Indian story gives a case study in how diplomatic space can be made wider without bringing immediate regional blowback. Careful signalling, transparency and reassurance enabled India to deepen partnerships while curtailing escalation. Nepal must do both to safeguard regional stability based on balanced signalling and inclusive diplomacy are essential to maintaining regional stability.

Conclusion

The U.S.–India Civil Nuclear Agreement represents a landmark case of strategic realignment in the post–Cold War international system. Driven by geopolitical considerations, enabled by executive leadership, and reinforced by domestic and international coalitions, the agreement redefined both bilateral relations and global nuclear governance.

For Nepal, the lesson is not replication but adaptation. Strategic diplomacy grounded in clarity of purpose, institutional coherence, and calibrated engagement with power realities can expand diplomatic space even for small states. The U.S.–India case demonstrates that sustained, credible diplomacy can reshape constraints and advance national interests without abandoning core principles.

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Lessons from Nepal Army's Modern Peacekeeping Deployments: Implications for Future



✉ **Ishwor Budhathoki**

Abstract

Since 1958, Nepal has consistently ranked as a top troop-contributing country (TCC) to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO), demonstrating an unwavering commitment to global peace and security. As peacekeeping mandates have evolved from traditional monitoring to complex, multidimensional interventions in volatile environments, the Nepal Army (NA) has accumulated invaluable operational experience. This article analyzes key operational lessons derived from the NA's modern deployments in missions characterized by asymmetric threats and robust mandates, specifically in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), Mali (MINUSMA), South Sudan (UNMISS), the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), and Lebanon (UNIFIL). Employing a qualitative analytical approach, the study identifies three critical lesson areas: Adaptability in Asymmetric Environments, Exemplary Conduct as a Strategic Asset, and Community Centric Civil-Military Interaction. The findings suggest that the NA's operational success is rooted in flexible force projection, high disciplinary standards, and a holistic approach to the Protection of Civilians. These lessons offer significant implications for strengthening future NA deployments and informing best practices for other troops contributing countries (TCCs) operating in the evolving context of modern peacekeeping.

Keywords: Nepal Army, UNPKO, Operational Adaptability, Asymmetric Warfare, Protection of Civilians, Soft Power

Introduction

Nepal's enduring commitment to global peace through active participation in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO) serves as a vital case study for the evolution of modern peacekeeping doctrine. Nepal's participation in UN peacekeeping missions is a cornerstone of its foreign policy and a source of national pride, with the country frequently ranking among the top TCCs globally (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d.; Thapa, 2024). The nature of peacekeeping has fundamentally shifted over the past decades, moving beyond traditional Chapter VI operations (consent, impartiality, and non-use of force except in self-

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defense) to more robust, Chapter VII-authorized missions that require proactive engagement in highly volatile, non-permissive environments (UN Peacekeeping, n.d.). Modern missions operate in settings where peace agreements are fragile, non-state actors and terrorist groups are prevalent, and threats are often asymmetric, demanding a new level of preparedness and operational dexterity from peacekeepers (Upadhyay, 2013).

This article seeks to analyze the specific operational lessons gathered from the Nepal Army's sustained and successful deployments in these challenging, contemporary environments. By focusing on recent and current robust missions, the study aims to extract actionable insights that can be leveraged to enhance the effectiveness and safety of the NA in future deployments and offer valuable perspectives for the broader peacekeeping community. Crucially, this study addresses the gap identified in existing literature regarding the critical analysis of the specific operational methodologies and tactical adaptations employed by Nepal Army (NA) contingents in robust mandates (Institute of South Asian Studies, 2021), particularly in response to asymmetric warfare.

Literature Review

The academic discourse on contemporary peacekeeping underscores the transition from traditional buffer-force roles to complex, multidimensional mandates, emphasizing the critical role of TCC conduct and robust operational capacity.

Academic literature highlights the shift in peacekeeping from inter-state to predominantly intra-state conflicts, leading to mandates that emphasize the Protection of Civilians (POC), security sector reform, and humanitarian assistance (UN Peacekeeping, n.d.; Williams, 2022). For TCCs like Nepal, the challenges include adapting to volatile, high-risk operational settings and managing complex interactions with diverse local populations, armed groups, and humanitarian actors. The literature consistently praises the exemplary conduct and discipline of Nepali peacekeepers. Thapa (2024) specifically emphasizes how the NA's adherence to a high internal discipline framework (both voluntary and enforced) directly contributes to mission credibility and effectiveness, especially in sensitive environments where misconduct can severely undermine the mission's legitimacy. Furthermore, the capacity of the Nepali Army's training center, the Birendra Peace Operations Training Centre (BPOTC), to provide comprehensive pre-deployment training (PDT) on cross-cutting issues like POC and gender perspectives is acknowledged as a vital enabler of their success (Peace Operations Training Institute, 2023). However, a significant gap remains in the critical analysis of the specific operational methodologies and tactical adaptations employed by NA contingents in robust mandates, particularly their specialized expertise in countering threats like Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), an area this study aims to address (Institute of South Asian Studies, 2021).

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative, descriptive, and analytical methodology, utilizing thematic analysis of secondary data to derive operational lessons from the Nepal Army's high-risk peacekeeping deployments. The primary data is derived from secondary sources,

including published academic articles, UN mission reports, official Nepali Army publications, and reputable media analyses focused on NA deployments in modern peacekeeping operations (post-2000).

The specific case studies considered include deployments in MONUSCO (DRC), UNMISS (South Sudan), MINUSMA (Mali), the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), and Lebanon (UNIFIL) given their characterization as robust and high-risk environments involving complex threats like IEDs and armed non-state actors. A thematic analysis was conducted on the collected data to identify recurring operational achievements, challenges, and documented best practices, which were then grouped into three core operational lessons. The analytical framework is grounded in the principles of UN peacekeeping effectiveness: Mandate Implementation, Safety and Security of Peacekeepers, and Credibility/Conduct. This method ensures academic rigor by systematically processing descriptive accounts to extract analytical insights and relevant findings.

Lessons from Modern Peace Keeping Deployments

The Nepal Army's extensive experience in contemporary, robust peacekeeping operations characterized by asymmetric warfare and complex Protection of Civilians (POC) mandates has generated essential operational insights across tactical flexibility, ethical conduct, and local engagement. The Nepal Army's experience in complex, high-risk missions offers three paramount operational lessons that are transferable to other TCCs and valuable for future UN mission planning: Adaptability in Asymmetric Environments, Exemplary Conduct and Discipline, and Community-Centric Civil-Military Interaction

Adaptability in Asymmetric Environments: The Strategic Shift to Mobile Security

The fundamental operational lesson derived from the NA's deployment in missions facing asymmetric threats is the necessity of moving from static, reactive defense to highly flexible, proactive force projection and specialized capability integration. Modern conflicts, particularly in missions like MONUSCO and MINUSMA, involve numerous non-state armed groups and require dealing with threats that are asymmetrical ranging from sophisticated Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) to sudden, complex small-arms attacks and ambushes (Institute of South Asian Studies, 2021). The Nepal Army's (NA) operational success in such settings is attributed to flexible training and tactical innovation.

- **Proactive Force Projection.** A critical lesson is the effectiveness of moving away from purely fixed defensive positions, a strategy often ineffective against mobile, non-state actors toward proactive, mobile patrolling and long-range patrols (LRPs) in 'no-go' areas (Upadhyay, 2013). This operational maneuver, essential for implementing the POC mandate, requires heightened force protection capabilities.
- **Specialized Capability Integration.** This flexibility is supported by the strategic deployment of niche capabilities. This includes specialized training in Counter-IED (C-IED) and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD), which the NA actively develops through its Birendra Peace Operations Training Centre (BPOTC) and international

partnerships (US Army, 2017). The willingness to deploy specialized units, such as Quick Reaction Forces (QRF) and Special Operations Forces, demonstrates an organizational commitment to robust mandate implementation and high readiness (UN, 2021). This specialization, particularly in C-IED, serves as a Force Multiplier, allowing the NA to accept and mitigate higher risk than general infantry units, directly contributing to the implementation of robust mandates.

Exemplary Conduct and Discipline: A Strategic Soft Power Asset

The exceptional standards of conduct and discipline maintained by Nepali peacekeepers are not merely behavioral attributes but are recognized as a strategic asset that maximizes mission credibility and facilitates operational space. Nepal's high standing as a TCC is inseparable from the consistently high conduct and discipline of its peacekeepers (Thapa, 2024). This is arguably the most crucial soft power asset. The NA's commitment to UN standards minimizes instances of misconduct, which are often cited as a major detractor from UN mission legitimacy (Thapa, 2024).

- **Discipline as Legitimacy.** The lesson here is the indispensability of internal ethical and behavioral frameworks (referred to as Discipline A and B by Donohue) that foster professionalism beyond externally enforced rules. This deep-seated culture of discipline ensures mission credibility. Furthermore, the NA's rapid response and stringent internal accountability mechanisms regarding any allegation of misconduct reinforce the commitment to upholding the highest standards of the 'blue helmet' (Thapa, 2024).
- **Strategic Enabler.** This high level of conduct directly enhances the legitimacy and impartiality of the peacekeepers in the eyes of the local population. This Discipline as a Strategic Enabler is crucial for operational effectiveness, as it facilitates positive interactions with host populations, builds the trust necessary for information gathering, and minimizes liabilities for the UN and the troops contributing countries (TCC).

Community Centric Civil-Military Interaction (CIMIC): A Holistic Approach to Protection of Civilians (POC)

The success of NA contingents in implementing the complex Protection of Civilians (POC) mandate relies significantly on their proficiency in Community-Centric Civil-Military Interaction (CIMIC), which transforms the peacekeeper's role into that of a credible partner for stabilization. In multidimensional missions, military contingents must work closely with civilian components, humanitarian agencies, and the local community (Upadhyay, 2013). A key operational lesson is the NA's success in implementing the POC mandate through a community-centric approach.

- **Effective Dialogue and Engagement.** This involves sustained dialogue with local leaders to build rapport and gather critical information. This enhances situational awareness and early warning capabilities against threats to civilians.
- **Strategic Humanitarian Assistance.** The deployments are often accompanied by limited but impactful Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) activities, such as medical camps or

construction assistance (UN, 2004). These activities bridge the trust gap between the peacekeepers and the vulnerable population. The operational success in POC is, therefore, not achieved through physical protection alone but through the effective utilization of low-profile, high-impact CIMIC activities. This approach transforms the peacekeeper from a purely military actor to a credible partner for peace and development (Sharma, 2009, as cited in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2024). This holistic view aligns with the evolving concept of peacekeeping as a tool for peacebuilding. Crucially, these activities cultivate trust, which is a prerequisite for reliable local information networks necessary for force protection and early warning against threats to civilians (UN, 2022).

Implications for Future Missions

The operational lessons learned by the Nepal Army have profound implications for its future deployments and for the broader troops contributing countries (TCC) community.

Prioritizing Adaptability Training

The future NA training must increasingly focus on scenario-based exercises simulating asymmetric threats (e.g., IEDs, complex ambushes) and non-permissive environments, emphasizing decentralized decision-making at the small unit level.

Reinforcing the Culture of Conduct

The high standard of discipline should be continually reinforced as a strategic asset. Future deployments must incorporate mandatory and continuous training on gender, cultural sensitivity, and human rights to maintain an impeccable record and maximize mission legitimacy.

Integrating Technology and Specialized Capabilities

To address modern threats, the NA should continue to leverage and invest in niche capabilities. This includes advanced Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) assets (such as Unmanned Aircraft Systems - UAS), and specialized engineering and medical support units to enhance self-sustainability and mission effectiveness in remote and hostile areas (UN, 2021).

Championing the TCC Voice

Nepal's role as a leading TCC allows it to advocate for a greater voice in mission planning and resource allocation at the UN Security Council and Department of Peace Operations, ensuring that the operational realities faced by ground troops are adequately addressed (The Diplomat Nepal, 2025).

Findings

The systematic analysis of the Nepal Army's operational experience points to the efficacy of prioritizing specialized training, embedding high disciplinary standards, and leveraging effective Civil-Military Interaction (CIMIC) for mandate success in volatile environments. The principal findings synthesized from the operational lessons are:

Specialized Capability as a Force Multiplier

The deployment of highly trained, niche units, such as EOD/C-IED companies, is critical for mission survival and operational continuity in environments dominated by asymmetric threats (e.g., MINUSMA). This specialization allows the NA to accept and mitigate higher risk than general infantry units, directly contributing to the implementation of robust mandates.

Discipline as a Strategic Enabler

Nepal's low rate of misconduct allegations compared to many other TCCs demonstrates that internal ethical standards (Discipline A) are a powerful strategic asset. This high level of conduct directly enhances the legitimacy and impartiality of the peacekeepers in the eyes of the local population, which is crucial for information gathering and effective POC implementation (Thapa, 2024).

CIMIC as a Core Component of Protection of Civilians (POC)

The operational success in POC is not achieved through physical protection alone but through the effective utilization of low-profile, high-impact CIMIC activities. These activities cultivate trust, which is a prerequisite for reliable local information networks necessary for force protection and early warning against threats to civilians (UN, 2022).

Adaptation in Pre-Deployment Training (PDT)

The continuous modification of PDT at the BPOTC to reflect the lessons from high-threat environments (like training on handling asymmetric threats and cultural sensitivity) is a key institutional factor underpinning the NA's success.

Recommendations

To solidify the strategic advantage derived from its operational lessons, the Nepal Army and the UN peacekeeping architecture should focus on enhancing specialized integration, promoting leadership roles, and securing appropriate resources. Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

Enhance Investment in Niche Capabilities

The NA should strategically invest in expanding and modernizing its specialized units. This includes advanced Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) assets (such as Unmanned Aircraft Systems - UAS), C-IED/EOD technologies, and robust field medical facilities, particularly for self-sustaining detachments in remote mission areas (UN, 2021).

Advocate for Higher Command and Staff Positions

The Government of Nepal and the NA should actively negotiate with the UN to secure a greater number of senior command and policy-level positions (e.g., Force Commanders, Deputy Force Commanders, Chief of Staff). Leveraging its impeccable reputation and experience in complex missions can justify this demand, ensuring the NA's valuable operational experience informs strategic decision-making at the UN Headquarters level.

Institutionalize Lessons Learned into Doctrine

Formally integrate the best practices of mobile patrolling, C-IED procedures, and community engagement models from MINUSMA and UNMISS into the core peacekeeping doctrine for all future deployments. This doctrine should be shared with the UN and other TCCs through structured knowledge-sharing platforms.

Increase Female Participation in Operational Roles

Continue to increase the deployment of female peacekeepers (staff officers, observers, and contingent troops) as they have proven critical in enhancing operational effectiveness, particularly in gaining access to and building trust with local female populations during POC and CIMIC activities.

Secure Equitable Financial and Logistic Support

The NA and the UN must ensure that the logistical and financial reimbursement mechanisms for TCCs adequately reflect the costs associated with deploying and maintaining specialized, high-readiness units in hazardous, asymmetric environments.

Conclusion

The Nepal Army's (NA) decades-long participation in modern, robust peacekeeping missions is not just a matter of foreign policy commitment; it represents a living laboratory for operational learning, demonstrating that success in today's complex theatres hinges on the strategic synthesis of capability, conduct, and connection. The analysis of the NA's deployments in challenging environments such as MONUSCO, MINUSMA, UNMISS and MINUSCA unequivocally demonstrates that effective peacekeeping in the 21st century demands more than just boots on the ground. The central lessons Adaptability in Asymmetric Environments, Exemplary Conduct and Discipline, and Community-Centric Civil-Military Interaction form a cohesive operational model that explains Nepal's sustained success and high reputation within the UN system.

The NA's proactive stance, shifting from static defense to mobile force projection and integrating specialized units like EOD/C-IED capabilities, is essential for mitigating asymmetric threats and effectively executing robust mandates. This operational agility ensures that peacekeepers can both survive and thrive in non-permissive areas. Furthermore, the lesson of Exemplary Conduct is perhaps the most profound; the NA has strategically proven that high ethical and behavioral standards are not secondary considerations but a strategic soft power asset. This discipline builds the trust and legitimacy necessary to operate effectively among local populations, which is the bedrock of successful information gathering and force protection (Thapa, 2024). Finally, the consistent application of a Community-Centric CIMIC approach confirms that implementing the Protection of Civilians (POC) mandate is a holistic endeavor, bridging the gap between military necessity and humanitarian imperative.

These hard-earned operational insights offer more than just a blueprint for the Nepal Army's future deployments. They provide transferable best practices for the entire Troop-Contributing Country (TCC) community grappling with the evolution of peacekeeping towards Chapter VII mandates. Moving forward, the NA must continue to prioritize investment in

specialized training and technology while leveraging its exceptional reputation to champion the TCC voice at the UN, ensuring that the operational realities from the field inform global peacekeeping policy. Ultimately, the Nepal Army's engagement in modern peacekeeping is one of resilience, professionalism, and strategic evolution. It confirms that the most successful peacekeeper is not merely a soldier, but an adaptable, disciplined, and engaged partner who views the local community not as a threat, but as the solution. Nepal's commitment serves as a powerful reminder that global peace requires consistent, high-quality human contribution backed by strategic lessons learned.

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People-Centric Security in Nepal: Citizens as the Core Source of National Strength



✍️ **Madhab Thapa**

Abstract

This article argues that Nepal's national security is fundamentally rooted in its people, positioning citizens as the primary source and sustaining force of national strength. Moving beyond conventional frameworks that emphasize military power and institutional capacity, the study highlights the multidimensional nature of security, including social cohesion, civic responsibility, and ethical leadership. Drawing on historical evidence, constitutional principles, and the interdependent roles of citizens, the military, and government, the article demonstrates how collective participation and human-social capital have shaped national resilience from unification and political transitions to internal conflict and disaster response. Nepal's 2015 Constitution reinforces inclusion, federalism, and proportional representation, strengthening legitimacy, accountability, and participatory governance. While acknowledging potential limits of a people-centric approach in extreme external threats, the analysis underscores that enduring national security arises from the alignment of capable citizens, professional institutions, and inclusive governance. The study contributes both theoretically and practically to understanding and enhancing Nepal's national resilience.

Keywords: National security, people-centric security, civic responsibility, national resilience, constitution, governance

Introduction

National security has traditionally framed in terms of territorial defense, military capability, and the capacity of the state to manage external threats. These dimensions remain vital. Yet over the past decades, security scholarship and policy thinking have increasingly emphasized that sustainability of a state depends as much on the resilience, cohesion, and ethical capacity of its population as on formal institutions (Buzan et al., 1998; UNDP, 1994). Security, in this broader understanding, is shaped not only by armed forces and borders, but also by political legitimacy, social harmony, economic opportunity, and respect for human dignity. Emerging security thinking in Nepal reflects this shift, recognizing that coercive

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authority and institutional strength alone are insufficient to sustain national security over time. For a geopolitically exposed, socially diverse, and democratically evolving nation such as Nepal, the foundations of security are inseparable from the people themselves.

The Constitution of Nepal articulates this people-centred vision for Nepal by vesting sovereignty explicitly in the people and by committing the state to an inclusive, participatory, and balanced state order (Constitution of Nepal, 2015). This constitutional arrangement carries direct strategic implications. Nepal's security policy places discourse internal cohesion, national unity, and public trust in state institutions at the center of stability. Where exclusion, marginalization, or unequal access to opportunity persist, insecurity manifests from within, often undermining the state more deeply than external threats (Adhikari, 2014). By contrast, when citizens perceive themselves as meaningful stakeholders in the state, they contribute to security through civic participation, compliance with the rule of law, and shared responsibility for public order and national well-being (Kaldor, 2007).

Nepal's historical experience offers strong support for this perspective. From the period of national unification through successive phases of state consolidation, external confrontation, political transformation, and disaster response, national endurance has depended less on material power than on collective sacrifice, social solidarity, and popular resilience (Baral, 2012; Bhattarai, 2003). Nepali scholars have repeatedly noted that a shared sense of identity and national unity has enabled the country to navigate prolonged periods of uncertainty and transition (Bhandari, 2016). These patterns suggest that security in Nepal has long been sustained through social and ethical bonds that extend beyond formal institutions or coercive capacity.

At present, Nepal confronts a range of non-traditional security challenges, including uneven development, unemployment, social polarization, governance shortcomings, and declining public trust. Such challenges, acknowledged in official policy discourse, cannot be resolved through force or administrative regulation alone. Addressing them requires an informed, skilled, and disciplined citizenry, as well as political and institutional leadership grounded in integrity and long-term vision. As Fukuyama (2011) argues in his analysis of state legitimacy, it is often the erosion of moral authority rather than a simple lack of capacity that weakens state institutions and undermines security.

This article advances the argument that the people of Nepal constitute both the primary source and the enduring strength of national security. Citizens, elected leadership, state institutions, and security forces operate within an interdependent relationship in which legitimacy originates with the people, authority is exercised through democratic governance, and protection is delivered by professional security institutions under civilian oversight. Where this relationship is anchored in trust, inclusion, and shared responsibility, security is reinforced. Where it breaks down, insecurity becomes difficult to contain.

Methodologically, the article adopts a qualitative and interpretive approach to national security analysis. It draws on historical-institutional perspectives, constitutional interpretation, and policy discourse to examine how people-centric security operates within

Nepal's specific political and social context. Rather than relying on quantitative modeling, the study synthesizes theoretical literature, historical experience, constitutional principles, and illustrative cases drawn from conflict, disaster response, and civil-military relations. This approach is suited to examining security as a socially constructed and ethically grounded phenomenon shaped by legitimacy, collective behavior, and state-society interaction.

The article contributes to Nepal's national security literature by addressing a persistent analytical gap between state-centric policy discourse and the social foundations of security outcomes. Although existing scholarship and policy documents increasingly acknowledge human security concerns, citizens are often treated as passive beneficiaries or sources of vulnerability rather than as active contributors to national strength. By advancing a people-centric framework, this study repositions citizens as the core source of legitimacy, resilience, and cohesion upon which institutional stability and military effectiveness ultimately depend. Drawing on Nepal's historical experience, constitutional design, civil-military relations, and contemporary security challenges, the article demonstrates that sustainable security emerges primarily from the quality of state-society relations rather than from coercive capacity alone. In doing so, it offers an analytically grounded perspective relevant not only to Nepal, but also to other small, diverse, and geopolitically sensitive states.

Conceptual Framework: People-Centric National Security

Evolution of Security Thinking

The meaning and practice of national security have evolved alongside changes in the character of states, societies, and the nature of threats confronting them. Classical security thinking, shaped largely by realist traditions, conceptualized national security in terms of military power, territorial defense, and the survival of the state within an anarchic international system (Walt, 1991). Within this framework, security concerns were defined predominantly by external threats, and the capacity of the state to deter or defeat adversaries was treated as the primary measure of security. While this perspective remains relevant for safeguarding sovereignty, it has become increasingly insufficient for explaining contemporary insecurity, which frequently originates from internal social, political, and economic dynamics rather than from cross-border aggression.

Recognizing these limitations, security studies progressively broadened the referent object of security beyond the state to include individuals, communities, and social systems, thereby acknowledging the internal dimensions of security (Buzan et al., 1998). This shift marked an important departure from narrowly militarized understandings of security and created analytical space for examining how governance quality, social cohesion, and political legitimacy shape national resilience. National resilience refers to the ability of a state to absorb shocks, manage internal challenges, and maintain stability, relying on both institutional capacity and societal cohesion (Adger, 2000; Stewart, 2008). Security, in this expanded sense, came to be understood not only as protection from external threats but also as the capacity of societies to manage internal stresses without descending into instability or violence.

Human Security and Its Limitations

The human security paradigm represented a major milestone in this intellectual evolution by redefining security as freedom from fear and freedom from want. Through this lens, economic well-being, health, education, political inclusion, and human dignity emerged as central security concerns (UNDP, 1994). This approach resonated strongly with post-Cold War realities and with the experiences of developing countries such as Nepal, where non-military threats often exert a more immediate and pervasive influence on everyday security than conventional interstate conflict.

Despite its contributions, human security has also attracted sustained criticism. Scholars have argued that many human security frameworks portray people primarily as vulnerable subjects in need of protection, rather than as active agents capable of generating security through their own initiative, organization, and collective capacity (Paris, 2001). By emphasizing vulnerability over agency, such approaches risk understating the role of citizens in shaping the conditions of stability and resilience. A people-centric national security framework responds to this limitation by repositioning citizens as the principal source of security, not merely as its recipients. In doing so, it shifts analytical attention from protection alone to participation, responsibility, and social contribution as integral components of national security. People-centric national security positions citizens not as passive recipients of protection but as active contributors whose behavior, trust, and collective capacity underpin the nation's stability and resilience.

People-Centric Security in Practice

At its core, people-centric national security rests on the premise that national strength flows from the quality, cohesion, and conduct of the population. Social trust, shared identity, civic responsibility, and ethical norms function as strategic assets that enhance resilience, facilitate collective action, and strengthen crisis-management capacity (Putnam, 2000). States characterized by high levels of social capital and institutional legitimacy are better positioned to absorb shocks, manage political contestation, and prevent the escalation of conflict. Social capital consists of networks, trust, and cooperative behaviors within communities that reinforce collective security and the functioning of institutions (ibid). Conversely, when public trust erodes and citizens become alienated from governance structures, insecurity often manifests through polarization, unrest, and institutional fragility, irrespective of military capability.

For small and geopolitically sensitive states such as Nepal, this perspective carries particular strategic relevance. Nepal's principal security challenges are largely internal and structural, arising from uneven development, unemployment, political fragmentation, corruption, and persistent governance deficits. Although these issues are widely acknowledged in national security discourse, they cannot be addressed through coercive instruments alone. Effective responses require active citizen participation, inclusive governance practices, and leadership grounded in integrity and accountability, thereby reinforcing the social contract between the state and society (Fukuyama, 2014).

A people-centric framework further underscores the reciprocal relationship between citizens and institutions. National security is strengthened when institutions exercise authority lawfully and fairly, and when citizens confer legitimacy through consent, compliance, and participation. In democratic systems, civilian control and public accountability of security institutions are central to maintaining this equilibrium. As Huntington (1957) observed, the effectiveness of security forces rests not only on material capability but also on professionalism and political neutrality anchored in constitutional authority and societal values.

Applied to Nepal, this conceptual framework places people at the heart of national security policy. It affirms that sustainable security depends on nurturing capable, ethically grounded, and engaged citizens across all regions and communities. In this sense, Nepal's most enduring defense lies not solely in its coercive military capacity, but in unity, integrity, and a shared sense of collective responsibility.

At the same time, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of a people-centric national security framework. Emphasizing the role of citizens carries the risk of over-romanticizing "the people," particularly in contexts where popular mobilization may be fragmented, exclusionary, or vulnerable to elite manipulation. Historical experience also demonstrates that mass mobilization, when detached from inclusive institutions and ethical leadership, can generate instability rather than security. Moreover, people-centric security cannot substitute for credible state capacity in situations of acute external threat, where military preparedness and diplomatic strategy remain indispensable. This article therefore does not present people-centric security as a replacement for institutional or military strength, but as a foundational condition that enhances their legitimacy, effectiveness, and long-term sustainability.

Nepal's Historical Experience and Constitutional Vision

People as Nation Builders and Defenders

Throughout Nepal's existence as a nation-state, the people have remained central to its national security. Nepal's historical trajectory demonstrates with notable consistency that the endurance of the state has depended less on material power than on the collective resolve, participation, and sacrifice of its population. From state formation and political transformation to crisis response and post-conflict recovery, the people have repeatedly shaped national security outcomes. King Prithvi Narayan Shah's enduring observation, "Prajā mota bhaya durbar baliyo rahanchha," captures this reality with particular clarity. This historical pattern reinforces the argument that the people constitute the central pillar of Nepal's security architecture.

The formation of modern Nepal was not solely a military enterprise but a broader process of social and political integration sustained by local cooperation, allegiance, and shared identity. While leadership provided strategic direction, territorial consolidation through national unification depended heavily on the willingness of local communities to align with an emerging political authority. Local elites, peasants, and the general population

played decisive roles in sustaining governance structures and defending territorial gains. Historical experience suggests that long-term stability is sustained less by coercive power than by legitimacy grounded in popular acceptance, a dynamic Tilly (1992) identifies as central to durable state formation. Nepal's continued sovereignty, despite its constrained geography between major powers, reflects this deeper reservoir of societal resilience rather than exceptional military strength (Baral, 2012).

Nepal's modern political history further illustrates the decisive role of the people during periods of systemic transition. The popular movements of 1990, 2006, and 2025 (Jana Andolan I and II, and the Gen Z movement) fundamentally reshaped the political order by dismantling entrenched governance structures and asserting demands for representation, accountability, and inclusion. Although these transitions were turbulent and at times destabilizing, they underscore a critical security lesson that political systems losing popular legitimacy become inherently fragile, whereas those grounded in participation acquire renewed stability (Linz & Stepan, 1996). In Nepal's case, these movements reaffirmed the principle that sovereignty ultimately resides with the people rather than with any single ruler or institution.

The decade-long internal conflict (1996-2006) provides another instructive dimension of people-centric security. While armed actors, particularly the Maoists, dominated the visible landscape of violence, it was the broader population that bore the social, psychological, and economic costs. Yet communities adapted and endured, often acting as informal stabilizers by preserving social networks and basic governance practices in the absence of effective state presence. Following the Comprehensive Peace Accord, post-conflict recovery depended heavily on popular willingness to reconcile, participate in political processes, and re-engage with state institutions. Research on post-conflict societies consistently demonstrates that durable peace cannot be achieved without grassroots legitimacy and societal buy-in (Adhikari, 2014; Mac Ginty, 2014), a lesson clearly reflected in Nepal's peace process.

Nepal's experience with natural disasters further reinforces the people-centric nature of security. The 2015 Gorkha earthquake, recurrent floods and landslides, and the COVID-19 pandemic repeatedly tested state capacity. In each case, community solidarity, volunteerism, and local leadership served as the first line of response, often mitigating harm before state institutions could fully mobilize. Youth groups, local cooperatives, and community organizations played vital roles in rescue, relief distribution, and recovery. These experiences demonstrate that social capital and civic responsibility function as strategic assets in national resilience, particularly in resource-constrained contexts (Adger, 2000; Bhandari, 2016). Civic responsibility encompasses the everyday duties of citizens, including lawful conduct, participation in governance, respect for diversity, and contribution to social cohesion (Dahl, 1989; Putnam, 2000).

At the same time, Nepal's history also exposes the security costs of exclusion and fragmentation. Periods characterized by regional disparities, identity-based marginalization, and weak state responsiveness have repeatedly generated political instability and eroded national cohesion. Movements in the Madhes and other forms of identity-based mobilization illustrate how unresolved socio-political grievances can escalate into security challenges, as

seen in incidents such as Gaur in Rautahat and Tikapur in Kailali. These episodes demonstrate that insecurity in Nepal has often emerged from internal contradictions rather than from direct external threats. As Gellner (1983) argues, the endurance of nations depends on shared identity and inclusive political arrangements that cultivate reciprocal obligations among citizens. Nepal's historical trajectory confirms this insight, revealing that unity reinforces security, whereas exclusion and division weaken it.

Constitutional Vision

Nepal's constitutional framework provides a strategic foundation for people-centric national security. The Constitution of Nepal (2015) explicitly vests sovereignty in the people and defines the state as inclusive, democratic, and committed to social justice. This constitutional orientation is not merely aspirational; it constitutes a security blueprint that recognizes legitimacy, participation, and balanced development as prerequisites for national stability. In a diverse and federal polity, constitutional inclusion functions as a stabilizing mechanism that binds citizens to the state through rights, duties, and shared ownership.

A defining feature of the constitution is its commitment to inclusion and proportional representation across state institutions. By formally recognizing Nepal's social, cultural, linguistic, and regional diversity, the constitution seeks to transform difference from a source of conflict into a foundation of unity. Comparative studies suggest that inclusive institutional practices reduce incentives for grievance mobilization and strengthen internal security by integrating marginalized groups (Lawoti, 2012; Lijphart, 1999).

Federalism and balanced development occupy a similarly central place in Nepal's constitutional vision. Persistent regional disparities have historically eroded trust in central authority and weakened national cohesion. The constitutional commitment to decentralization reflects an understanding that uneven development constitutes a latent security risk. Unchecked inequalities pose serious threats to political stability, as Stewart (2008) cautions, underscoring the security rationale behind Nepal's emphasis on decentralization and governance closer to the people.

Equally important is the constitution's articulation of citizenship as a relationship of reciprocal rights and duties. While fundamental rights safeguard dignity and opportunity, constitutional duties emphasize respect for law, social harmony, and national unity. This balance reinforces a people-centric security ethic in which citizens are active contributors to stability rather than passive recipients of state protection (Dahl, 1989).

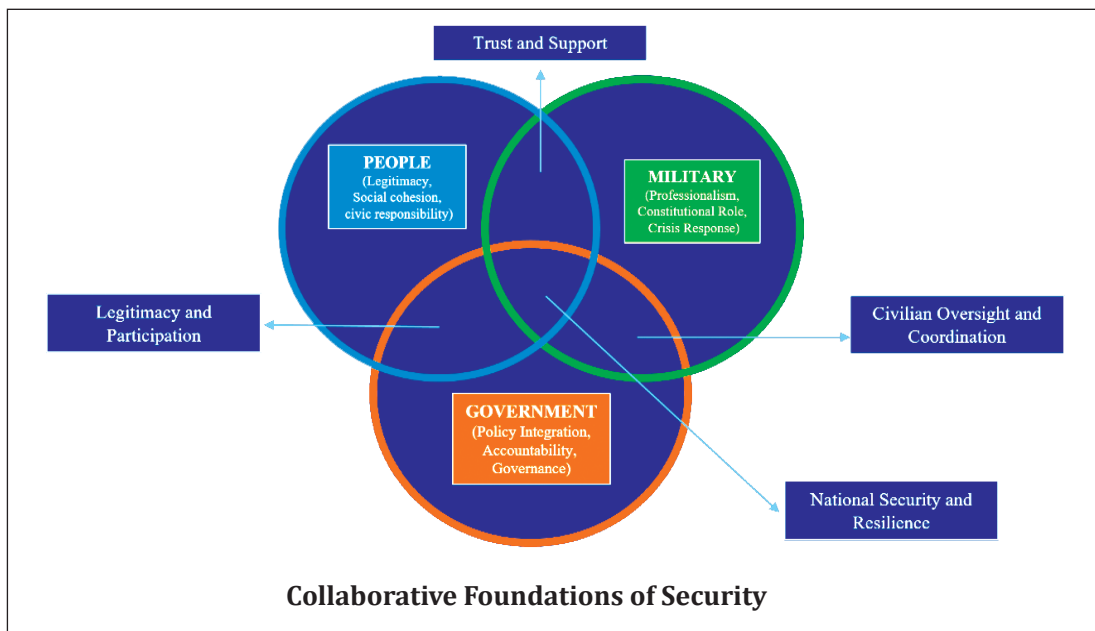
Finally, the constitution delineates the relationship between civilian authority and security institutions, reinforcing democratic oversight and professionalism. Civilian control ensures that coercive power serves constitutional objectives rather than partisan interests. By embedding security institutions firmly within constitutional norms and societal expectations, professional forces gain both legitimacy and effectiveness, a relationship Huntington (1957) regarded as essential to democratic stability and one that strengthens Nepal's people-government-security nexus.

Taken together, Nepal’s historical experience and constitutional vision converge on a central insight that sustainable national security depends on socially inclusive, morally legitimate, and participatory state-people relations. The constitution thus stands not only as a legal framework but as an instrument for building a secure, cohesive, and resilient Nepal.

People-Military-Government Trinity: Collaborative Foundations of National Security

National security does not emanate solely from military strength or state authority; rather, it is produced through a dynamic and interdependent relationship among the people, the military, and the government. In Nepal’s context, this trinity forms the foundational architecture of security, stability and resilience. Each pillar performs a distinct function, yet none can operate effectively in isolation. When aligned through trust, legitimacy, and shared purpose, these actors transform national potential into sustainable security. Figure 1 illustrates how citizens, the military, and government jointly produce sustainable security through mutual accountability and participation.

Figure 1. People-Military-Government Trinity: Interdependent Foundations of National Security



Source: Created by the author, 2025

Citizens as the Foundation

The people constitute the original source of national security because legitimacy, cohesion, and resilience ultimately flow from society. National stability, as Deutsch (1963) argues, emerges more reliably from social integration and shared values than from state

coercion alone, underscoring the strategic importance of collective identity and social cohesion. In Nepal, citizens contribute to security not only through formal political participation, such as elections and public deliberation, but also through everyday civic conduct, including respect for the rule of law, payment of taxes, community solidarity, and voluntary engagement during crises. These practices generate social capital that no institutional mechanism can replicate.

Nepal's plural social composition renders inclusive civic behavior particularly significant. Ethnic, linguistic, and regional diversity can function either as a source of strength or as a vector of fragility. Where citizens internalize constitutional values, tolerance, and mutual responsibility, diversity enhances resilience; where exclusion and mistrust prevail, internal vulnerabilities deepen (Fearon & Laitin, 2003). The relative stability of many multiethnic local communities during periods of political unrest illustrates how everyday social cooperation can prevent escalation, even when national-level institutions are under strain. Citizen behavior thus directly shapes the operational environment in which both government policy and military action unfold.

Military as a Professional and Constitutional Institution

The Nepali Army (NA) occupies a constitutionally defined role as the guardian of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and democratic institutions, while also supporting civilian authorities during disasters and emergencies (Constitution of Nepal, 2015, Art. 249). In democratic systems, military effectiveness depends not only on operational capability but also on public trust and constitutional legitimacy. Huntington's (1957) concept of objective civilian control remains instructive in this regard, as professionalism and political neutrality strengthen both military effectiveness and democratic stability.

Nepal's experience demonstrates that the military's legitimacy is reinforced when it is perceived as a protector of the people rather than as an autonomous coercive actor. The NA's visible role during the 2015 earthquake, conducting search and rescue operations, airlifting relief supplies, and supporting reconstruction, significantly strengthened civil-military coordination. Similarly, its involvement in pandemic response and infrastructure support has underscored the people-centric character of national security (Angbo, 2021; Shrestha & Pathranarakul, 2018). Such engagement positions the military as an enabler of national resilience, embedded within society rather than detached from it.

Government as Coordinator and Policy Integrator

The government functions as the coordinating nexus that translates popular legitimacy and military capability into coherent security outcomes. Through policy formulation, resource allocation, and institutional oversight, elected authorities ensure that security objectives align with constitutional values and societal priorities. Transparent, accountable, and inclusive governance is therefore not merely a democratic ideal but a security necessity.

Nepal's federal structure amplifies this responsibility. Decentralization brings decision-making closer to citizens, enhancing responsiveness and trust, while simultaneously requiring effective coordination across federal, provincial, and local governments (Shrestha,

2018). Effective disaster management in several provinces illustrates how empowered and coordinated local governments can mobilize communities, integrate security forces, and deliver timely responses. Conversely, governance failures and coordination gaps reveal how institutional fragmentation can undermine national security.

Interdependence, Accountability, and the Development-Security Nexus

The people-military-government trinity functions optimally when mutual accountability and alignment are sustained. Citizens contribute legitimacy and social cohesion; the military provides professional protection and crisis response; and the government ensures policy coherence and oversight. Waltz's (1979) systems perspective reminds us that stability emerges from the structure of relationships rather than from isolated capabilities. In Nepal, misalignment among these pillars, whether through governance deficits, erosion of trust, or politicization of institutions, can magnify vulnerabilities. Conversely, synergy allows limited resources to be converted into durable security.

Disaster response offers a practical illustration of this interdependence. Citizen volunteerism, military logistics, and governmental coordination have repeatedly converged to mitigate human suffering and restore stability. Such collaboration demonstrates how security and development reinforce one another, as effective security enables development while inclusive development reduces the underlying drivers of insecurity (Putnam, 2000).

Civic Responsibility as the Foundation of National Strength

Within a people-centric security framework, citizens are not passive beneficiaries of protection but active contributors to national security. Civic duties such as lawful conduct, community engagement, responsible political participation, and resistance to divisive narratives generate social capital that enhances resilience and mitigates conflict (Putnam, 2000). In Nepal, community-based disaster response, local mediation practices, and civic volunteerism have consistently complemented state efforts during periods of crisis (Shrestha, 2017).

Leadership at all levels acts as a multiplier of citizen capacity. Ethical, inclusive, and accountable leadership converts human potential into collective security outcomes, while poor leadership dissipates social trust and cohesion (Thompson, 2005). Within Nepal's federal system, local governments play a particularly vital role in public health, disaster management, and community security. Participatory leadership at the local level strengthens the social contract and reinforces national unity (Cheema & Rondinelli, 2007).

In sum, Nepal's security strength lies in the competence, character, and commitment of its people. Human capital, ethical leadership, and civic responsibility together form a reservoir of national resilience, demonstrating that security and development are mutually reinforcing dimensions of national strength. These interdependencies establish the groundwork for analyzing policy implications of a people-centric approach.

Conclusion

Nepal's national security, development, and resilience are ultimately grounded in its people. Citizens are not passive beneficiaries of security arrangements but the primary source and sustaining force of national security. The nation's strengths and vulnerabilities are shaped by collective behavior, shared values, and everyday choices. National security, therefore, cannot be understood as the domain of institutions, laws, or military capability alone; it is a shared moral, civic, and social undertaking in which every citizen has a meaningful role.

Safeguarding the nation extends well beyond compliance with formal rules and regulations. It requires ethical conduct, respect for diversity, social responsibility, and active engagement in democratic life. When citizens act with integrity, contribute productively to society, and participate constructively in public affairs, they reinforce social cohesion and reduce conditions that give rise to insecurity. Leadership is equally consequential. Leaders who demonstrate honesty, fairness, and long-term vision cultivate public trust and national unity, while those driven by narrow or short-term interests undermine the social foundations of security. National resilience emerges most clearly when citizens and leaders are guided by shared constitutional values and a common sense of purpose.

National unity remains central to Nepal's security ethos. The country's cultural, regional, linguistic, and social diversity is not a weakness but a strategic asset when governed through inclusion, justice, and equal opportunity. History demonstrates that internal division, exclusion, and mistrust erode national strength more effectively than external threats. A people-centric approach to security therefore demands solidarity, mutual respect, and sustained commitment to the common good.

Security must also be understood as an intergenerational responsibility. The ethical standards upheld today, the quality of governance practiced, and the level of civic responsibility exercised will shape the Nepal inherited by future generations. In essence, the nation is the lived expression of its people's values, conduct, and aspirations. When citizens uphold their responsibilities with integrity, discipline, and cooperation, national security becomes resilient rather than fragile. By deliberately investing in, developing, and empowering capable, ethical, and engaged citizens, Nepal can transform its human potential into enduring national strength and secure its future across generations.

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Musahar Community across the National Border: Migration, Brotherhood, and Security issues at East-Central Madhes



 **Dr. Madhu Giri**

Abstract

The Musahars community of Nepal and Northern India across the border shared not only myths of origin, history, and culture but also political-economic status in both countries. They believed that the historical trajectories of the British-Indian land tenure system and the political economy of the caste system produced and perpetuated the community as unfree land labourers. Land Tenure and caste systems pushed the community into the dark tunnel of poverty, landlessness, statelessness, and multidimensional marginalization.

The research is part of PhD fieldwork carried out among the Musahar community across the Nepal-India border in 2013 and 2016. Observation, key informant interview, and case study methods were employed to generate qualitative data. Thematic analysis of migration, brotherhood, landlessness, and collective actions across the borders was focused on addressing the questions.

They frequently migrate across the border for their livelihood opportunities and security concerns. They have a strong sense of brotherhood irrespective of different national borders. They adjusted migrant members for long-term stay within the community in both countries. Many of them have been deprived from citizenship, land, and official records in Nepal, and therefore, the newcomers felt at easy to stay with their people who shared similar official and material problems. Due to open borders and imagined brotherhood, newcomer's adjustment of the community multiplied issues of landlessness, citizenship, and security issues in both countries. The leadership of the community mobilized the Musahar for better education, political-economic status, and official legitimacy. Despite security issues of trafficking, smuggling, theft, and murder across the open border, the Musahars experienced freedom of mobility and choices of settlement, which are considered fundamental strategies of livelihood.

Keywords: Musahar, border, migration, brotherhood, landlessness, security

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Introduction

Caste, ethnic, and cultural similarity across the national border produces not only livelihood opportunities, Socio-economic safety, and social harmony but also insecurity and crime among the border communities. Political-economically marginalized caste and ethnic groups frequently move across the border for their livelihood and transitory settlement in India and Nepal. Musahar, one of the largest Madhesi-Dalit communities of Nepal, shared myth of origin, culture, political-economic status and history with the Musahar of North India. Their socio-economic and human development indicators articulate a highly marginal status in both countries. They believed that the British Colonial Raj and the Rana regime of Nepal compelled the community to become Haruwa-Charuwa (unfree agricultural labour) of Jamindars in both countries (Giri, 2018). Due to the similarity of agrarian culture, caste system, and land tenure system in Nepal and India, Nepali Musahars were also considered unfree labor from the very beginning of settlement in Tarai-Madhes to the promulgation of the Bonded Labour (Prohibition) Act 2002 (Regmi, 1977; Dhakal, 2007). Though it voids all debts and oral/written agreements related to the Haruwa-Charuwa, many of them secretly continued because of the scarcity of livelihood options for them (Giri, 2025). They claimed that they were son of the soil of the Madhes because their earlier parents made arable land by clearing dense forest. They first settled and handed over to the Jamindars. Despite they made arable land in Madhes, they refused to own land as personal property. They enjoyed migration and group settlement rather than permanent settlement at a single territory. They employed various art of not being governed (Scott, 2009) when the reformation of the land tenure system was promulgated and implemented in 1964 (Regmi, 1977). Gradually, land ownership and citizenship are considered as legitimacy of citizens and better governance technology in Nepal. The Musahars were excluded from owning citizenship and land. About 97% of the Musahars were landless (CEDA, 2007), a large number of them have no citizenship, and their recent literacy rate is 35.8% (NSO, 2022).

When there was a dense forest, they preferred to stay there as woodcutters and hunters. The Jamindari system lured them because there was overpopulation in North India. Anglo-Nepal War (1814-1816) fixed the Nepal-India border, but border crossing remained open for people of both countries (Michael, 2012). Open border movement and migration issues remained open; therefore, many North Indians migrated in Madhes and vice versa. The governments of both countries continued to show perpetual indifference of open border migration, trafficking, smuggling, and crime. Because of landlessness and people without citizenship, it was difficult to differentiate newcomers and genuine citizens of Nepal among the Musahars. When they faced difficulties, they moved to another settlement and country. Musahars preferred egalitarianism and a collective living culture. Any newcomer can adjust among the Musahars if he/she is not concerned about social status. They shared a strong sense of brotherhood and kinship ties. When a Musahar girl got married with Indian Musahar boy, the couple can adjust at the girl's parents' settlement. They informed significant cases of uxori-local residence in different Musahar settlements in Siraha. Some of them have dual and/or transitory settlement practices. Similarly, Some Musahr boys married and settled in India. They frequently visited parents' home in Nepal and some of sons-in-law from India permanently stayed in Musahari of Siraha.

Anthropology of Security

The concept of security encompasses a broad spectrum of human experience, ranging from existential threats of war and structural violence to the material realities of innovative surveillance technology and barbed-wire fencing. While security is analyzed across international relations, sociology, and political science, anthropology offers a uniquely comprehensive and critical lens. By prioritizing ethnographic detail and cultural nuances, anthropology emphasizes the historical, material, and socio-economic conditions of individuals rather than viewing security as a mere "natural" response to state policy (Maguire, Frois & Zurawski, 2014).

Security is not an organic growth; it is a social construct refashioned by discourses on social disorder, migration, human rights, technology, and crime. Historically, classical anthropologists situated security within magical, ritual, and functional contexts (Tylor, 1899; Malinowski, 1945; Radcliffe-Brown, 1952). In these frameworks, social collectivity and order were paramount. Pedersen and Holbraad (2013) observe that life-cycle rituals and magical rites served to conquer uncertainty, thereby maintaining the social unity that provided a "wellspring" of security.

After 1950, the anthropological study of security shifted toward themes of environmental catastrophe, risk, poverty, and ethnic conflict (Orr, 1979; Turton et al., 1974). Influenced by critical international relations, the narrative evolved from "non-eventful" stability to a focus on war, crime, and illegal migration.

In contemporary contexts, the deregulation of communities and borders often reproduces "cultures of fear." These cultures are frequently leveraged at political borders to perpetuate the marginalization of specific populations (Linke & Smith, 2009). When illegal border crossings and petty crimes become daily occurrences, fear and terror become normalized—habituated into the fabric of everyday life. Furthermore, powerful states utilize surveillance technologies and governance mechanisms to dehumanize and disenfranchise subjects under the guise of protection.

The security landscape of the Nepal-India border exemplifies these theoretical shifts. Here, security is not just a policy matter but an everyday negotiation. The normalization of insecurity is visible through the "culture of fear" that surrounds cross-border marriages and the daily migration patterns of specific communities. In this context, the livelihood of border residents becomes a site where state surveillance and local social practices constantly collide.

Statement of Problem

The traditional concept of security saturates contemporary practices of globalization, migration, and media technology. New technology and connectivity are blended in an 'insecurity continuum' (Bigo, 2009: 585), which includes transnational terrorism, crime, pandemic, and migration. Anthropologists, from the very beginning, focused on cultural and ritual security when a cultural group moved out and into a different cultural border (Barth, 1969; Goldstein, 2010). Migration, security, and national border politics cannot and should

not be understood as natural phenomena because politics, culture and the nature of society negotiate border policy, sense of security and mobility of people (Maguire, Frois, & Zurawski, 2014). The concept of culture and security are problematized either purely ritual and cultural domain or as very politics of national police issue. Anderson (1983) clearly presented the common identity, brotherhood and nationalism of the same cultural group politically belonging to different states. The emergence of state as administrative and political units has divided a cultural group into different states. If they followed similar culture and believed a similar myth of origin, they imagined that they were brothers (Anderson, 1983). The imagined communities not only shared identity and culture but also cultivated strong sense of brotherhood. The similarity of culture, origin myth and sense of brotherhood proliferates migration and issues of insecurity in the societies of both countries. Uxorilocal residence practices of Musahar community perpetuated porousness of the population and stability. I have observed that married daughters and their Indian husbands have been living in different Musahari in Siraha. The porous border and porous community can be analyzed through the lens of the particular culture.

Objectives

In the context of a porous border, and the political economic status of the Musahars in Madhes, raised issues of migration, collective identity, and insecurity across border communities of both countries. This article tries to explore the knowledge gap of how cultural practices of the particular community affect the security of the society. How did the Musahars employ open borders for their livelihood strategies? How did they articulate collective identity and sense of brotherhood among Nepali and Indian Musahars? How did the brotherhood and kinship strengthen vulnerable security and porousness in the society?

Research Methods

I have employed qualitative data to explore migration and security negotiation at the national border and various Musahar settlements at Siraha District. Both exploratory and descriptive research design were employed. I stayed in the Musahar community during PhD research in 2013, 2016, and transient walks along the border were conducted in 2023. With the help of Musahar friends and a translator from Nepal, I talked to some Musahar youth of Bihar as well. I have participated mass meeting organized by the Musahar organization in Janakpur, where Jiten Ram Majhi, ex-chief minister of Bihar, addressed as the chief guest. I talked with him about issues of Musahars in Nepal and India. Participant observation, key informant interviews, and case study methods were employed to generate data. Collected narratives were thematically organized and analyzed.

Presentation and Analysis

Marriage and Migration Culture across Border

Rajlal Sada has been making a hut near his house in the Musahari at Lahan on 17th, August 2019. He brought four piece of new wood from Chure and a few pieces of bamboo from village. He was digging foundation of a small house. When I engaged with him, he shared that

the hut was going to make for his married daughter and son-in law. His daughter eloped with an Indian Musahar boy in 2018. He argued that the marriage was acceptable because the boy also belongs to Musahar caste. He denied that it was not international marriage because both countries Musahars claimed the same nation (people with culture) but their national identity were different. He preferred to call this type of marriage as inter-country marriage. This type of marriage was historically and culturally practiced for a long time. If a non-Musahar got married to a Musahar girl, the groom asserted Musahar identity at the end. It was easy to belong to the Musahar identity but difficult to change from Musahar. He said that you could be Musahar without an official process. Many Musahars have neither citizenship nor land certificate to verify their caste ethnic identity. A similar context applies in case of national identity among the Indian and Nepali Musahars.

He continued that his daughter and son-in-law stayed in India for a year. The boy has no job, no education, no land to make a separate house, and no special place-based livelihood skill. When they have a baby girl, they come to the bride's parents' home. They stayed bride's parents' home more than six months. Rajlal said that his house has not adequate space for daughter and son-in law. His daughter and son-in-law were interested in living in Nepal for a long time. Therefore, he planned to make a separate house for them. Rajlal has another unmarried daughter and two sons. Both sons went to India for seasonal work by following the seniors of the settlement. They hardly earned few thousands to cover food for months. He said, "Musahars need more enjoyment and fun when they have money and property". His sons also spent a significant portion of their earnings on fun and enjoyment. Daughters served their parents more than sons. Daughters are caring and hardworking by nature.

He consulted with other Musahars in the settlement before making house for the married daughter and son-in-law. They agreed because the case was not new in the settlement and their cultural practices. There were possibilities of this type of house for other's daughters in the settlement. He shared that many non-native (mostly Indian) Musahar boys and girls have been living in the settlement after their marriage. In many Musahari of Siraha, the Indian groom stayed and was protected as a member of the community. It was very difficult to explore the native and non-native Musahar people because many genuine Musahars also did not have Nepali citizenship. They have been living without citizenship. Jogindra Sada (about 35 years old Musahar) argued that they did not care to make citizenship because they were not qualified to get government jobs. He rhetorically interrogated, "Are we getting a government job? Are we buying land and business? Why do a Musahar need citizenship?" Now, citizenship is required for everywhere. He agreed, "We did not have an idea and knowledge about the importance of citizenship at that time. Our parents also refused to get land and citizenship. So we do". When government officials visited the settlement, the community protected all because they believed that their increasing number was a strength of their resistance to the government officials. Now, young Musahars have realized the importance of citizenship. They did not accuse any of the newcomers as Indian because they were relatives and supported in the communities. Rajlal added that many Nepali Musahar boys and girls settled in Bihar and North Indian territory as well.

The migration and settlement of the Musahars in Nepal and India had been historically rooted. They believed that the ancestors of the Musahars, as an offshoot of the Bhuiya tribe, migrated from Chhottanagpur to North India and Nepal. He heard that his ancestors were settled in the Madhes from centuries back because the oral history indicates Jogiya-Jajhar (a village in Saptari district) as birth place of Dina-Bhadri (real-world ancestor and family god of the Musahars). Other middle-aged Musahars of the settlement also engaged with the narrative of Rajlal. They said that educated and economically well-off Musahars did not migrate from India to Nepal and vice versa. Marginalized Musahars in both countries were landless and frequently migrated in search of better livelihood options. In Nepal, large number of Musahars were landless and highly marginalized in socio-economic indicators (NSO, 2022). Despite their significant population size (274974), they were excluded from political leadership, intellectual (literacy rate 35.8%) and economic sectors (Giri, 2018; NSO, 2022).

Similar cases were observed in Golbazar and Jamdaha Musahari when I have conducted my PhD research in 2015 and subsequent visits in 2018 and 2023. They shared that firewood and wood selling at the Indian border was the most attractive income source of the Musahars who settled near the forest. Shiblal Sada (50 years) said that they used to cut wood in the Chure and sell it at the Nepal-India border in the early morning. They carried wood on cycles. There was no checking as these days. Police and government officials did not visit the Chure and inner settlement of Madhesi villages. The contexts were changed. It is very difficult to cut and sell wood at Chure.

They remembered the border activities in those days. The border was just symbolic because people around the border engaged in various illegal activities. There was open space at the border despite a few check posts were set up. Nepal police posts and army barracks were installed far in distance. The cross-border pass was without a security check post. They argued that the Nepal-India border was (is) porous because most Nepali visited India for their everyday shopping. All material and food items are 30-40% cheaper in the Indian market. They questioned who bought expensive materials in the Nepali market when there were cheap materials nearby the village. Any people of Nepal and India crossed the border without interruption. The security personnel of the Nepal police found indifference for plain origin Nepali and Indian people. The Indian security officials made inquiries about the strangers, young girls and hill origin people. The border life is easy because of the openness of mobility.

Shivalal added that the open border supported the marginalized communities to migrate to Indian in search of jobs in India. There was more scope and market for laour, jobs, and work in India in comparison to Nepal. A large number of Musahars migrated as seasonal migrants during the agricultural peak season. They sell wood and firewood at the border. Therefore, Musahars preferred the open border of Nepal and India. Musahar youths argued that politically powerful communities also provided land and citizenship documents for their Indian relatives silently. The issues of fraudulent citizenship were raised when the neighbors felt insecurity and excluded from political and economic share.

Sense of Brotherhood: Common Myth of Origin

त्रिहुत राज, मघैया नगरिया २	Tirhut raj Magahiya Nagariya...2	Trihut state, Magadha town...2
सबरिके सन्तान येइ	Sabari ke santan yai	Sabari's descendant all
कुल देवके धाजा देखुं	Kul dev ke dhajaa dekhu	Look family deity bamboo stand
मुसहरका पहिचान येइ	Musahar ke pahichan yai	All is Musahar's identity
दिना भद्री के महराइ सुनियो २	Dina Bhadri ke Maharae sunio...2	Listen Dina Bhadri's epic song...2
पहलमानिके गाथा येइ	Pahalmani ke gatha yai	All is story of bravery
हरवा चरुवा भेलो जीवान	Harawa Charawa velo jivan	Life became Haruwa-Charuwa
गिरहत राजके खेल येइ	Girhat raj ke khel yai	All is game of masters

The lyrical poem recited by Saran Sada (Musahar) at the inaugural session of Musahar public mass meeting in Janakpur in 2016 articulates the political economic history of marginalization, migration, and sense of brotherhood identity of the *Musahars* of Nepal and India. It conveys 'thick' oral narratives and relatively long political economic history of unfree labour, nationality and brotherhood. The imageries of the antiquity of *Tirhut*, *Magadha* and *Sabari* are used in these verses as evidences of the deep historical roots of the Musahar community in the North Indian regions. The *Musahars* sub-groups identify themselves with the name of historical principalities and are thus called *Tirhutiya* (those whose ancestors were from Tirhut) and *Magahiya* (those whose ancestors belonged to *Madhes* or *Madyades*). They believe that both groups are the descendants of *Sabari Sadhu*. The lyricist presents *Dhajaa* as a silent symbol of the *Musahars'* family deities *Dina Ram* and *Dina Bhadri* (*Dina Bhadri* here after) who hold history of bravery, dignity and identity of all Musahars. The *Dina Bhadri*, as the cultural epicenter of the *Musahars*, is considered their model character for public resistance against landlords. The lyricist heard such deep rooted historical existence and significant deed of the ancestors which are still popular and frequently relayed through different versions of Maharai stories among *Madhesi* Communities (Giri, 2025).

The second stanza is also full of imagery of oral myth and storytelling. The supra human characters of their ancestors have been mythologized and their stories are told among the people through various programs including comedy/entertainments organized by different communities. But the stanza incorporates both bravery of protagonist and actual plights of the *Musahars* as *Haruwa-Charuwa* from last two hundred years. The last line of the stanza denotes *Jamindars'* regime as the cause of their plights. All these imageries are heavily loaded with long political economic history of land tenure systems and caste systems of the region. Both the history of bravery and that of the slavery of the *Musahars* through many generations are depicted in the lyrical version of the story. That *Dina Bhadri* were brave freedom fighters who liberated the Musahar ancestors from the slavery of landlord is a famous myth (history) formally recited by few knowledgeable storytellers commonly called *Maharai Gaune in Nepal and India*. This common myth of origin binds and strengthens them together for collective resistance and brotherhood solidarity.

Janakpur Conference: Trans-Border Solidarity

Nepal Musahar Utthan Sangh, Janakpur based Musahar organization, organized national level convention at Janakpur 2016. *Jitenram Majhi* (Musahar)¹ was chief guest of the convention. The program was like transnational Musahar identity solidarity campaign. Large number of *Musahars* from Tarai districts of Nepal and cross-border came to listen Jitenram. Thousands of *Musahars* came with cultural dance from inner villages. Two buses were reserved by the *Musahars* of Jamdaha to go to Janakpur. Lalchan said that all *Musahars* paid bus fare because it was their own program. There were many non-Musahar speakers too. Hundreds of youth volunteers were appointed for the proper management of the program. Flex pictures of *Dina Bhadri* were demonstrated as national hero of the country. *Dina Bhadri* dance was performed by two skilled youths of Janakpur. The characters carried bow and arrow on their shoulders. Both women and men sang *Dina Bhadri* hymns with musical instruments.

Jitenram Majhi was one of the living ideals of the Musahar community of Nepal and India. There was double (Indian and Nepali) security for his arrival and departure from Janakpur. During his speech, he gave many examples of Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi who put their efforts for the annihilation of caste system. He argued that caste was deeply rooted in the mind and behavior of people but the caste as a system was almost dead. He respected all the *Musahars* who shared *Dina Bhadri* as ancestors because they were laborious and hard worker. He thanked their ancestors who taught them work ethic. His speech was mostly opposition to dominant castes people who did not have work ethic. He linked that people including state authorities without work ethic were corrupt. He reiterated that denial of legal rights of people over land of the state was policy corruption by the state authorities. Moreover, he encouraged the *Musahars* for education, creativity and collective well being. He said:

Time has come up. The *Musahars* should compete with 'others' because our knowledge and values were disregarded by dominant culture. We respect 'others' but 'others' do not respect us. The *Musahars* were made landless and homeless when there was caste system in both India and Nepal. The *Musahars* were tribal group but caste people made them bonded labour. Because of demise of caste system, we were freed. We have to use our mind and body for the creative livelihood and different identity. Any Musahar should not die because of lack food, shelter and medicine. Our *Kul* (clan) had done best task for the welfare of larger humanity. We were blessed people and now it is our turn to show our bravery and humanity. We were neither *Musahars* nor caste group before being bonded. We were made of marginalized people. We were indigenous people with knowledge and skills of survival. If a Musahar left any alien planet, the Musahar would survive by eating soil and grass. The *Musahars* were the gifted people.

¹ Ex-chief minister of Bihar

Jitenram Majhi delivered speech for the unification of all Musahar of Nepal and India for collective prosperity, collective imagination of education and collective leadership. He stressed educational participation because he argued that education was main tool of argument, resistance and bargaining with dominant state authority. Again he stated, "The Musahar will be unemployed even if they are educated because education itself does not generate employment. Employment is access to resources. We have knowledge of brick making. When bricks are sold, there is utilization of our knowledge. Therefore, certain type of knowledge is applicable for certain type of economic production. But, education provides critical and creative thinking and behaviors." He appealed all the *Musahars* to send their children school. He added, "I pray to God *Dina Bhadri* for struggle of the *Musahars* to face hardship of life". He promised to meet government of Nepal for the sake of economic subsidies and maximum affirmative action for the *Musahars* of Nepal. At the end of his speech, *Musahars Utthan Sangh* presented Dina-Bhadri performance for the honor of him and enchanted *Dina Bhadri* slogan, *Dina Bhadri Ki jay!!* The organizers requested him to meet the government authorities of Nepal for the recognition *Dina Bhadri* as national hero. Next day, he visited *Dina Bhadri* temples at *Kataiyakhap* and *Jogiya Jhajar* of Saptari to express cultural solidarity, genealogical reverence, cultural unity and spiritual solidarity of the *Musahars* of Nepal and India.

Photo: Jitenram Majhi, ex-chief minister of Bihar, addressing the Musahar at Janakpur



Source: Photos taken by the researcher in 2016.

Jitenram Majhi's physical presence at Janakpur was both presence of symbolic power, cultural politics and symbolic revitalization of *Musahars* articulations from private sphere to Public sphere. Majhi repeatedly told that Janakpur was not only just place rather it was center of cultural heritage where many cultural groups got chances to promote their cultural differences. Janakpur and Jitenram Majhi both represent symbolic power for the resistance

against the language of single story narrators. His presence and program in Janakpur were articulation of cultural politics of Musahar community at four different levels. First, within the *Musahars* themselves struggles occur over their material and symbolic resources. This does not only involve redefining the *Musahars'* boundaries belongingness and its rules for inclusion, struggles occur over defining a proper public image of the *Musahar* culture as well as over establishing them in charge of redefining and promoting a specific public image of the *Musahars*. The second level pertains to the inter-group competition for rights, privileges and resources, where, among other things, specific culture can be used as a political currency. Third, struggle occurs between the state, dominant group-single story maker- on the one hand, and the *Musahars* populations of Tarai. The Fourth, the *Musahar* representations were increasingly being geared to promote images not only *Musahars* elites in the national context but also to fit their agenda into valid international model and solidarity.

Janakpur Conference established collective imagination of the *Musahars* of Nepal and India in the line of urgency of revitalization of primordial cultural symbols and mythic narratives for the legitimacy of redefinition and reformation of the political economic status. Their arrival on public spheres has multiple meanings. Public sphere emerges as constructive element democratization processes of cultural difference. Their participation on public programs consists in the freedom of individual/group to form their opinions and to carry it into public discussions (Habermas, 1989). The process of opinion formation presupposes access to information as well as participation in ongoing debates about the condition of society and specific groups of the society. The mode of the debate and reasoning build collective imagination about diversity of people and their cultural phenomenon and as a zone of cultural debate where different "types, forms, and domains of cultures are encountering, interrogating and contesting each other" (Appadurai, 1988, p.6). In terms of resistance, it was meaningful not only for public demonstration but also for policy lobby.

Discussion

In the evening of Janakpur conference, *Musahars* activists were sharing their status of land with Jitenram Majhi. He also shared history and collective efforts of the *Musahars* of Bihar. When the *Musahars* activists introduced me as a researcher of *Musahar* culture with Jitenram, he asked me a question, "How land was distributed among the people in Nepal?" It was very difficult question to answer because land was not separated with political and cultural politics throughout history. The historical trajectory of land dragged total political economy and cultural politics of land distribution in Nepal. When I shared him some stories of political economy of land from Mahesh C. Regmi (1977) and Richard Burghart (1984), then Jitenram including Nepali *Musahar* activists argued that the *Musahars* and some other Dalits communities were systematically excluded from the equal access of land resources. Both historical references (Regmi, 1977; Burghart, 1984) that I have shared them argued that dominant people were gifted land by the state –it was controlled by dominant people. Among them, Chandralal Sada and Namsaran rejected everyday version of dominant language in the society that depicted the *Musahars* were destroyer of own land, they became landless because

they got drunk by destroying own property'. Moreover, they argued that the Musahar was projected as if he/she did not like home and land of the country. They were depicted as if the *Musahars* had sold all property/land given by the state. Then they rejected stereotypical understanding of the *Musahars* in everyday language. They raised fundamental question to the dominant people and the state, "Had you (state) given us land and citizenship and then we sold and became landless and stateless? Do you know how your ancestors got land and other got deprived? Did your people (dominant) naturally receive land and the *Musahars* were made landless and stateless by nature?" This was interrogation upon the commonsense understanding of the people and culture. Their interrogations were anthropological because anthropologists love interrogation upon everyday common sense knowledge which are not natural. Jitenram Majhi suggested to them to go through the history of the land and educate their children. Then, educated Musahars would come up with questions of violence and exploitation through symbolic power of land. The discussion among the *Musahars* pushed me back to the history of land again.

Richard Burghart (1984) following the line of M.C. Regmi (1977), notes that at the turn of the nineteenth century the Gorkha rulers referred to their territorial domain in terms of *Muluk* (possessions) or, more precisely, "the entire possessions of the king of Gorkha" (Burghart 1984, p.103). He further conceptualized that in the administration of king's possessions the king saw himself as a landlord (Malik) who classified exclusively his tracts of land according to tenurial categories and then assigned, bestowed, licensed, or auctioned the rights and duties over these tracts of land to his subjects (Burghart 1984, p.103). Regmi has documented that the tenurial categories differed with respect to the specific rights and duties of the subject vis-à-vis the king's land, as well as with respect to powers which the king accorded the subject in the enjoyment of these rights and duties (Regmi, 1977: 210). Regmi argued that these categories defined the different statuses of tributary rajas (*rajya tenure*), military (*jagir*), civil administrators (*nankar*), tenant cultivators (*raikar*), servant and artisans (*rakam, jagera, jagir*), religious associations (*guthi*), and individual persons (such as nobles, Brahmins, ascetics, war widows) who had been awarded a private means of livelihood (*birta*) at the personal bequest of the king (Burghart, 1984, p.103). The tenurial scheme was complex because the tenant cultivators were entitled or relinquished their tenurial rights over plots of King's land anytime. The tenurial scheme defined the rents, levies, duties, and fees of obeisance that the tenants submitted to the king directly or indirectly through his revenue collectors (Burghart, 1984, p.104). Hence, state's landlordism started and perpetuated for centuries through delaying adequate land distribution policy and legitimacy of citizens.

After Rana regime, land reform initiatives were taken by political parties and Palace. The porous border issue was once noticed and then neglected again. Royal Land Reform Commission 1952 and land Act 1957 had been enacted but they did not make much change on land deprived community and transborder migration. King Mahendra promulgated the Land Reform Act 1962 but after implementation of the policy 7.8% peasant households remained landless (Joshi & Masson, 2007). He tried to maintain the border by settling ex-army at

border front (Joshi & Masson, 2007). After the restoration of democracy in 1990, government of Nepal formed committees thereafter talked much about land reform, but the situation of landless and migration continued. The persistence of traditional landlord-tenants relations is manifested in the government generated statistics: the agricultural census 2001 shows that about 5% households own 37% of arable land, while 47% of households own only 15% of arable land. In addition, about 25% of households are landless (Joshi & Mansson, 2007).

There was discussion about whether the *Musahars* needed land or job. Because of similarity and sense of brotherhood, both migration and international migration continued. The most of the participants put the view that they needed job rather than land because they were made victims of land labour. Their logic was that small piece of land was not sufficient to change their economic status. It perpetuated their poverty forever. Most of them argued that monthly job, at least a member in a family, was comparatively better. Jitenram argued that land rights campaigns initiated by many NGOs need to be understood and employment rights need to be advocated. If they have better job in both countries, the porous border will be controlled.

This political economic history of land ownership genealogy showed that land was initially sole property of the king and close relatives and administrators of the palace. Ranas, as de facto rulers, utilized land and forest resources for income generation source through free labour and imposition of heavy upon tenants. Namsaran and Chandralal Sada were true because the Musahar community was never included in the land game. Namsaran Sada argued that rules of game were applicable for those who played game. He said:

We are neither players nor played land ownership and accumulation game in Nepal. Neither we owned land nor did we lose land. We believed in collective ownership of natural resources but power players divided as much as they could and restricted to own for the remaining land. It is invalid logic to call the *Musahars* as landless community. It would be logical if the state had given land in any historical period.

Based on Namsaran's interpretation of land politics, calling Musahar community as landless would be not only fallacious but also 'symbolic violence' (Bourdieu, 1998). It can be argued that landless status was used as tool of domination and humiliation by dominant people.

To sum up, the *Musahars* raised critical question upon the authority regarding listing them as the 'Dalit community'. They collectively claimed that they were indigenous people living in the land before the demarcation of the Nepal-India border. Their collective celebration of soil of Dina Bhadri symbolized that they were legitimate people of the region. Scott's conclusions resonate with those individual and community resistance cases in which I, too found that subordinate groups - preeminently the so-called untouchables who were at the bottom of the caste hierarchy - made transnational solidarity and rejected upper-caste discrimination. They were no longer passive receivers of the development agencies. They silently opposed

NGOs programs that targeted them as receiver of the goals of development. Their trans-border solidarity for the acceleration of public interactions, pressures and transformations of imposed identities reproduced new flavor of collective imagination of the optimistic future. Antonio Gramsci writes, "The lower classes, historically on the defensive, can only achieve self-awareness via a series of negations, via their consciousness of the identity and class limit of their enemy" (Gramsci, 1971, p.272). This consciousness has a historical tendency to come to the surface, locally among some of activists before being generalized on a wider scale. In spite of insignificant dissimilarities in household livelihood aspects, there was one prominent feature which they had in common, a collective consciousness of marginalized caste, collective imagination of a single nation, optimistic future and 'hope of life in capitalists dominated world' (Tsing, 2015, p. 5). Therefore, they organized collective campaigns to write their fate by their own hands.

The series of campaigns in this chapter showed that the *Musahars* who were invisible in public domain till 1990, entered public arena. Their issues and queries of origin became public discourse and they have been engaged in this discourse. The transformation from offstage to onstage performance indicated their emerging public spheres provided by democratic political environment of the state (Giri, 2018). Though they still employed hidden transcripts and/or 'Zomia thinking' (Shneiderman, 2010), their access to public meetings, public opinions and campaigns symbolized their negations with dominant rulers. Besides open political air after 1990, civil society organizations and ethnic campaigns heavily penetrate marginalized communities in the menu of empowerment, liberation and development intervention. Like other ethnic groups, *Musahars* (trans-border) started collective campaigns against political -economic marginalization as well as ethnic identity and representation to public spheres. Further, 10 years' long Maoist insurgency, People' Movement II, Madhes and Janjati Movements, Tharu Movement, and ethnic identity-based federalization discourse paved the way to new ethnic identity in the new Nepal (Whelpton et.al. 2016) among the *Musahars*. To sum up, the recent changes observed nationwide in identity polity have hit the *Musahars* hard. Their individual and collective campaigns are indications of their political empowerment. The main function of such collective engagement of identity transformation, transformation of discrimination, and educational campaign seems to be maintaining the Jati unity, cultural identity, integrity, solidarity, collective bargaining with the states in Nepal and India.

Conclusion

The cross-border existence of the Musahar community challenges traditional Westphalian notions of sovereignty and citizenship. Their practices of labor migration, international marriage, and cultural synchronicity across the Nepal-India border do not merely reflect mobility; they perpetuate a cycle of systemic insecurity, statelessness, and landlessness.

The state's reliance on "mythic indicators" of citizenship—primarily land ownership and descent certificates—fails to account for the Musahar experience. Because the Musahars find

no pragmatic value in documents that offer them little political or economic protection, they engage in what can be termed the "art of not being governed." By refusing to center their lives around state-sanctioned documents, they effectively bypass the state's mechanisms of control.

For the Musahar, the porous border acts as a vital economic safety net. Key factors include:

- Uxorilocal Practices: A cultural openness to newcomers and matrilineal residence (settling with the wife's family) facilitates seamless cross-border relocation.
- Kinship Connectivity: Events like the Janakpur conference and the involvement of Indian Musahar leaders demonstrate a collective solidarity that ignores national boundaries.
- Normalization of the Border: Everyday crossings for "cross-border shopping" and labor have normalized the border zone, transforming it from a barrier into a shared social space.

Ultimately, the Musahar narrative demands a shift in how we perceive border security. While the state views unregulated movement as a "vulnerability," for the Musahar, it is a survival strategy. Their kinship-based connectivity suggests that **cultural identity**, rather than national identity, is the primary driver of migration in this region. The "security" of the border society is therefore not found in fences or certificates, but in the strength of cross-border brotherhood and the fluid mobility that mitigates their deep-seated economic deprivation.

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Financial Crisis and its Impact on National Security



✉ **Namuna Joshi**

Abstract

This article explores how financial crises can deeply affect a country's national security. When a financial system breaks down due to reasons like excessive debt, weak banking practices, poor regulation, political instability, or global shocks, its repercussion can go far beyond the economy. Governments may struggle to fund defense projects, maintain public and essential services, and respond to emergencies. Citizens may lose trust in the financial system, social and political unrest can grow. These situations can weaken a country's ability to protect itself and make it more vulnerable to both internal and external threats.

The article explains the causes of financial crises and how they can damage national security by reducing government revenue, increasing unemployment, and harming a country's global reputation. It also presents real-world examples such as the Great Depression, the Asian Financial Crisis, the Sri Lankan economic collapse, and the Greek debt crisis to show how financial instability can lead to serious challenges globally.

Finally, the article offers practical recommendations to reduce the risk of financial crises and protect national security. These include better financial regulation, stronger planning between economic and security sectors, and building a more diverse and resilient economy. The key message is that financial health is not just about money, it is essential for a country's safety, stability, and independence.

Keywords: Financial crisis, national security, economic instability, political instability, external shocks, defense, public, unemployment, financial system.

Introduction

Financial crisis is a situation when the financial system stops working properly or begins to malfunction. It typically happens when people lose faith in the banking system, the banking system malfunctions, stock market crashes, fall in value of national currency, asset bubbles, global shocks, sovereign debt defaults or economic recessions. These situations can cause panic and shock among the public and business houses. Although financial crisis often

is viewed as an economic problem, its effect is not only seen in the financial system but can go far beyond the financial system. When the economy begins to fail, national security is affected in a very deep and often unnoticed manner.

Money is one of the core foundations of national security. A strong economy helps a country to develop strong military forces and invest in defense technology, as well as to respond to emergencies. As the International Monetary Fund (IMF) puts it, “macroeconomic stability and sound fiscal policies are critical to the maintenance of political stability and the achievement of sustained development, which in turn are closely linked to security.” Moreover, the World Bank has noted that economic fragility may pose risks to conflict and the weakening of institutions in the international arena. From the historical perspective, economic failure has been known to weaken security structures in the past, such as in the case of the Great Depression, which led to widespread economic hardship and political extremism in the international arena, thereby changing the dynamics of international security completely.

This article explores the link between financial crises and national security, causes, impact, real world examples and possible strategies to mitigate financial crisis in the country.

Review of Literature

Some researchers have studied the relationship between economic stability and national security. According to Hans J. Morgenthau in his book “Politics Among Nations”, economic power and human resources are vital elements of national power. A financially sound economy enables governments to sustain military power and stability. On the other hand, economic instability weakens the capacity of governments to defend their sovereignty and stability.

Research carried out on significant financial crises has shown the impact of economic instability. Ben S. Bernanke studied the causes and consequences of the Great Depression and observed that economic instability results in unemployment and political instability. The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have observed that economic stability is vital in maintaining political stability and preventing conflicts.

Research carried out on other international financial crises such as the Asian Financial Crisis and the Global Financial Crisis has further shown that financial instability could result in social unrest, decreased defense spending, and weakened state institutions. Recent studies carried out on the economic crisis in Sri Lanka have shown how severe financial collapse could result in instability in governance and social order. The studies have shown that financial crises have profound effects not just on economic growth but also on national security.

Statement of Problem

Currently, financial crises have become a recurring feature in the global economy. Financial crises have been witnessed in various countries across the globe, with some of these crises including the Great Depression, the Asian Financial Crisis, and the Global Financial Crisis. These crises have shown the potential of economic instability to severely affect a country's economy. Although these crises have been extensively analyzed from an economic viewpoint, their security implications for a country have not been sufficiently highlighted.

When a financial crisis occurs in a country, the government may be faced with reduced revenues, increased debt, and unemployment. This may limit the government's capacity to fund various sectors of the economy, such as the defense sector, law enforcement, and provision of various public services. Financial crises may also cause social unrest, political instability, and weakening of a country's institutions, hence threatening its security.

In spite of the obvious link between economic stability and national security, little consideration has been afforded to examining the relationship in an exhaustive manner. As such, it is imperative that an examination of the relationship between financial crises and national security is conducted by examining the causative factors, effects, and the socio-political consequences of financial crises.

Understanding Financial Crises and National Security

When we talk about national security, we typically understand protection of a country's territory, political sovereignty and citizens against threats arising from inside and outside the country. These measures are comprised of military defense, intelligence, cybersecurity, and diplomatic influence among others. But from a broader perspective, national security not only means physical security but also economic and financial security. A strong country has a well-equipped military presence, which is possible only through strong funding and budgeting in the defense sector. In other words, strong financial system is the foundation of national security. It is what keeps the military power intact, secures investor and citizen confidence, keeps the government functioning and can respond to emergencies without external interferences. Financial crises can have severe impact on national security from government malfunctioning, loss of citizen's confidence, banking system failure, foreign influences. It paralyses the country's ability to respond to internal and external threats, which may be geo-political or otherwise.

Causes of Financial Crisis

Financial crisis can have damaging effects on people's lives, businesses and the overall economy. They can lead to job losses, high prices of products and services, business closures, and decline in living standards of people. Some of the main causes of financial crisis have been explained as follows:

Excessive Borrowing and Public Debt

One of the main causes of financial crisis is excessive borrowing by the government from foreign sources. When a government spends more money than it earns, it needs to borrow money to cover the deficit. While borrowing can help immediate financial needs, taking too much debt can create serious economic problems. When a government has high level of debt, a large portion of government budget goes into interest payment rather than funding of government projects. This can affect economic development and reduce economic growth. This can also trigger investor confidence, weaken the domestic currency and rise in borrowing costs. For instance, Greece's excessive borrowing led to severe debt crisis in 2009 weakening its economy, budget cuts, political instability and social unrest.

Weak Banking Systems

A poorly managed banking system is one of the important causes of financial crisis. Banks are an indispensable part of any country's economy. Banks collect and manage deposits from the public and provide loans to the needy to support economic activities. When banks fail to perform effectively, the entire financial system is shaken up. Bank failures are typically caused by poor risk management, weak internal control practices, poor supervisory practices by central bank and regulatory authorities, exposure to non-performing loans. In addition, poor corporate governance and poor disclosure practices can also lead to financial crisis. When a banking system fails, people lose trust in banks causing liquidity problems, non-availability of loans to run businesses and ultimately slowing down the economy even more. For instance: The collapse of Lehman Brothers led to the failure of the banking system of the United States. This led to a reduction in government revenues and increased national debt.

Poor Financial Regulation

Government agencies and financial regulators are responsible for placing strong regulatory frameworks and supervisory practices. When there are weak regulatory practices, financial systems might take big risks to earn more revenue by breaching or using the regulatory loopholes. This can make the entire financial system vulnerable. For example, if banking supervision is weak, banks may lend loans to people or companies who do not have strong repayment capacity. Over time, such risky lending can accumulate within the system. Without proper monitoring, these risky practices can spread and worsen, increasing the likelihood of widespread defaults. When such loans or investments fail, banks may collapse, people lose faith in the banking system. Once confidence is lost, people may withdraw deposits, businesses may struggle to access credit, and a financial crisis can quickly begin.

Political Instability

Frequent changes in government and policy uncertainty can hurt investor confidence. Both local investors and foreign investors are discouraged from investing in a politically challenged country. Continued political chaos, lack of public transparency, frequent policy changes and misuse of public funds can affect investment, affecting the process of capital formation and hinder economic growth of the country, which can result in financial crisis.

This can be clearly evidenced in Zimbabwe in the 2000s. The political instability, questionable land reform policies, and poor governance led to a decline in foreign investment, hence the Zimbabwe Hyperinflation Crisis, which has adversely affected the Zimbabwean economy (International Monetary Fund, 2009).

Another case of political instability discouraging foreign investment can be evidenced in Pakistan. The government has experienced a series of regime changes, discouraging foreign investors. The political instability has been cited as one of the factors that influence foreign direct investment and economic growth in the country (Khan & Akbar, 2013).

These cases clearly indicate that political instability discourages investment, hence economic crises.

External Shock

Sometimes changes in external factors or external politics can also lead to financial crisis. Such external factors may be global recession, sudden rise in oil or gas prices, wars, political conflicts, or pandemics can drastically affect local economy. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic massively affected the tourism and hospitality industry in Nepal and making the Nepalese economy vulnerable.

Asset Bubbles and Investor Panic

An asset bubble is a condition when the prices of an asset such as stocks, cryptocurrency or houses are inflated than their real price and their prices are overvalued. This usually happens due to high demand, speculation and investor attraction towards such assets. In other words, such situation happens when people keep buying an asset with a hope that its process will keep increasing not because of its worth but rather because of speculation. When the bubbles burst, investors begin to sell their assets even in loss and create mass panic among the investors. The US housing bubble of 2008 is a classic example of how an asset bubble caused worldwide recession.

Economic Imbalances

When a country's imports exceed exports, it creates a trade deficit. When there is continuous trade deficit, it weakens economy of the country. It leads to dependence on foreign capital and accumulation of external debt. Poor fiscal and monetary policies can also lead to financial crisis. For example, when a central bank prints too much money, it can lead to hyperinflation. Such economic imbalances can weaken investor confidence compelling foreign investors to withdraw their money from the country, which can trigger a financial crisis.

Impact of Financial Crisis on National Security

A financial crisis not only affects an industry, market, company or individual, but can post a serious risk to country's national security. When an economy gets disrupted, the government's ability to protect citizens, maintain law and order gets weakened. Some of the impact of financial crisis on national security has been discussed below:

Reduction in Government Revenue and Defense Budgeting

As a financial crisis happens, tax revenue, which is the main source of revenue for majority of countries, falls sharply because of low income, low corporate profits and decreased business transactions. This can result in fiscal deficit compelling the government to reduce spending or borrow more. This affects the defense budgeting which means reduced funding for military personnel, delay in procurement of modern military equipment, arms and ammunition, delay in technological upgrades. This can also result in weak border securities and internal security mechanisms. Such inadequate defense budget is bound to weaken the preparedness of the armed forces.

A clear case is evident in the occurrence of the Global Financial Crisis of 2008, which affected many economies across the globe. Due to economic recession and increases in government debt, many governments cut down their defense budgets. For instance, in the United Kingdom, there was a significant cut in military spending as outlined in the Strategic Defence and Security Review of 2010, which involved reductions in military personnel and delays in various defense equipment programs (UK Government, 2010). The United States also introduced budget control measures that impacted the rate of growth in defense spending, as well as reductions in funding of certain military programs (Congressional Budget Office, 2013).

Another case is demonstrated in Russia in the wake of the 1998 Russian Financial Crisis. This financial crisis led to a serious economic recession in Russia, which reduced the government's income. This led the Russian government to cut back on military expenditure and the modernization of the armed forces (Cooper, 2002).

Thus, financial constraints can affect the country's border and internal security mechanisms. In the long term, the reduced defense expenditure can affect the operational efficiency of the armed forces in dealing with both internal and external security issues.

Increased Public Debt

Countries often rely on foreign aid and external aid during a financial crisis. This can make a country vulnerable to powerful countries. A country in a debt crisis might also be forced to accept terms that can affect country's sovereignty or strategic interest to fulfill external interest. In addition, high debt can also affect country's credit rating and country's ability to protect its citizens.

An example can be seen in Sri Lanka during the Sri Lankan Economic Crisis that started in the year 2022. The economic crisis was characterized by a debt crisis and the lack of foreign exchange, prompting Sri Lanka to seek financial assistance from the International Monetary Fund and other global actors. The crisis compromised the economic stability of the country, including national security (World Bank, 2023).

Rise in unemployment

Human resources are a critical part of national power, given that the population of a given state forms the basis of the workforce for the national economy and development. According to Hans J. Morgenthau in his book **Politics Among Nations**, the population and the overall human resources of a given state are critical parts of national power given their contribution to national economic, military, and political power (Morgenthau, 1948).

One of the significant effects of a financial crisis is the rise in the level of unemployment in the given state. This is due to the fact that when the economy is in a recession and businesses are experiencing reduced revenues, they respond by cutting the number of employees in the private sector in order to reduce the overall cost of doing business. Consequently, the level of unemployment in the economy rises significantly during the period of the financial crisis.

This is evident in the case of the Great Depression, when unemployment in the United States reached as high as 25% by 1933, resulting in a huge number of people without jobs (Bernanke, 2000). Again, in the Global Financial Crisis of 2008, unemployment in many countries, including Spain and Greece, touched as high as 40% among young people (International Labour Organization, 2012).

Political Instability

Political instability is one of the major impacts of a financial crisis. When the economy weakens, people lose jobs, inflation rises and cost of living also increases. This can lead to public dissatisfaction against the government. People begin to lose trust in the government and blame them for economic failure. When this happens, people demand a new leader or a new government. Further money is required to conduct elections, and coalition governments may also become unstable. This further deteriorates the political situation, making the country more vulnerable to external threats and pressure. In such situations, businesses and investors are also hesitant to invest in such country due to the instability, which can further slowdown the economic activity.

Global Reputation

A financial crisis can damage a country's reputation internationally. Foreign investors may lose confidence, credit ratings may fall and affect foreign direct investment. This affects a country's ability to influence international decisions.

Cases of Financial Crises and its effect in the national security

According to Ted Robert Gurr, political instability and violence often arise when there is a gap between people's expectations and their actual living conditions. In his book "Why Men Rebel", he explains that when people feel deprived compared to what they believe they deserve, frustration can lead to protests, rebellion, and threats to national security (Gurr, 1970). There are ample cases of financial crises in the world that affected national security. Some of the cases of financial crises have been discussed as follows:

The Great Depression

The Great Depression is one of the world's greatest economic recessions that started from the year 1929 AD and lasted till 1929 AD. The economic downturn started in the United States, the largest economy of the world, when the stock market severely crashed. The event is popularly known as the Wall Street Crash of 1929 or the Great Crash. Although the stock market crashed in the United States, its impact not only affected the US but almost every country in the world.

Following the recession, there was less economic activity, decline in industrial production, unemployment increased as high as 23.6% in 1932 AD, banking failures with depositors losing \$140 billion, further decline in stock market index, trade barriers among the countries, deflation (The Balance, 2022).

The economic chaos created political instability across several countries. The Great Depression had a major impact in Germany that led to the rise of Nazi party and Adolf Hitler. The rise of Nazis in Germany is what led to the World War II. In desperation for stability and employment, people turned to extremist leaders promising national revival (Know Germany, n.d.).

The Great Depression also had a great influence on the Japanese economy. Japan mainly exported silk products to the United States. Due to the economic crisis in the world, the export of silk from Japan to the U.S. was severely affected. This led to a serious economic problem for the farmers as well as the people of Japan. The economic situation was unstable in Japan, which affected the democratic government in the country. This led to the rise of militarist parties in Japan's political scene in the early 1930s. The Japanese military introduced the concept of economic imperialism to overcome the problems faced by the country. This led to the invasion of the territory of Manchuria in 1931 by Japan. This was a major cause of the World War II that later occurred in the world.

This shows that a financial crisis of one country not only impacts a particular country but can have a lasting impact across multiple countries of the world. This can result in hampering the national security of multiple countries of the world.

Asian Financial Crisis

Asian financial crisis began in Thailand in 1977 AD when the Thai Bhat was devalued against the US dollar. The event was a result of inadequate foreign currency reserves and quickly affected other Asian countries also. The currency of other Asian countries also began to fall. Currencies, stock markets, and property values drooped in countries such as Thailand, Indonesia, South Korea and Malaysia. As a result of the crisis, people began to lose their jobs, businesses were shut down, there was rise in unemployment rate, withdrawal of foreign investment, bankruptcy of companies and rise in poverty level.

In Indonesia, the crises led to protests and riots that finally brought down President in the year 1988 AD (Facts and Details, n.d.). In Thailand, there was continuous political leadership and resulting social tension. Most countries became more dependent upon lenders like the International Monetary Fund and Asian Development Bank (Asian Development Bank, 2000).

Economic breakdown in Asian countries turned into political instability and social unrest, weakening national and regional security.

The Russian Financial Crisis

In August 1998, Russia defaulted on its debt and devalued the ruble after a sharp fall in oil prices and excessive government borrowing. The crises resulted in decline in the value of the Russian Ruble, heightened rate of inflation loss in value of bank deposits (The Moscow Times, 2018). The collapse resulted in decrease in defense funding, non-payment of wages to Russian soldiers, reduced military expenditures and more dependence of foreign loans (EveryCRSReport.com, 1999).

The Global Financial Crisis

The Global financial crisis began in the United States in the year 2008 AD as a result of housing bubble crash. The crisis that started in the United States affected many countries in the world. The crises nearly collapsed majority of the investment and commercial banks. The Global Financial Crisis resulted in unemployment of approximately 7.5 million people between 2007 to 2009 AD. The unemployment rate reached 10 percent in 2010. The crises also led to rising poverty levels, fall in Dow Jones Industrial Average. The crisis also resulted in decrease in defense budgeting by the United States, impacting the countries national security and balance of power in the international geo-politics (U.S. Department of Defense, 2011).

COVID-19 Shock

While COVID-19 pandemic is not exactly a financial crisis, the pandemic undoubtedly posed a serious threat on global economy. The world's collective gross domestic product (GDP) fell by 3.4 percent in the year 2020 (Statista, n.d.). Several people had to lose their jobs, and many businesses also collapsed because of COVID-19 pandemic. Some businesses have still not been able to recover from the losses or damage caused by the pandemic. COVID-19 taught us that national security lies not only on the military strength but also to the health infrastructures. The security of citizens were severely impacted globally.

Sri Lankan Economic Crisis:

The most recent instance of a financial crisis is the Sri Lankan Economic Crisis that started in the year 2019. It is one powerful example of how financial collapse threatens national security. The Sri Lankan government had declared the worst economic crisis in the country and food emergency was also declared. The country ran out of foreign reserves and could not pay for basic imports like fuel, food, and medicines. Inflation soared, and the currency lost nearly all its value (BBC News, 2022). The government defaulted on foreign debt for the first time in history. As a result of the economic crisis, mass protests were held in different parts of the country forcing the President to flee. The political system almost collapsed, and law enforcement could not maintain order. The Sri Lankan financial crisis is not just an economic event, and such event if not handled properly could be a threat to national security.

Greek Debt Crisis:

Greece's financial crisis began as an aftermath of 2008 financial crisis. The crisis was caused by large government spending, fiscal mismanagement and slow economic growth. As a result of the crisis, the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) fell drastically, several Greek companies went bankrupt, unemployment rate grew to 23.1 percent in 2012, increase in poverty line, increases in taxes and political imbalances.

Recommendations for mitigating financial crisis

While national insecurity cannot be eradicated completely, however, a country can take some initiatives to decrease the insecurity to a certain level. Some of the recommendations for mitigating financial crisis and thereby increasing national security have been discussed below:

Integration of Financial and Security Planning

The government should bring together both the finance and defense ministries to work closely to plan the national budget. By holding joint meetings and assessments, they can make sure that financial decisions also support the country's security needs. Proper planning is important to decide how much money should go to defense so that the military can be well-equipped and efficient.

Strong Financial Regulation and Supervision

Governments must establish and implement strong regulatory frameworks for monitoring and supervision of financial institutions such as banks, stock exchange, brokers, investment bankers among others. Periodic audits and supervisions shall be done to avoid system failure. It shall be ensured that there is transparency and accountability of financial institutions towards the public and implementation of strong corporate governance practices.

Diversification of Economy

Sometimes, a country's too much dependence on other countries for essential goods can lead to financial crisis due to external shock such as rise in oil prices. Shifting to other sectors such as manufacturing, technology and energy sectors can provide stability to the economy and makes the country less vulnerable to external factors. A diversified economy makes the nation self-sufficient, increased job opportunities in the country, more economic activities in the country which aids in economic growth.

Promote transparency and accountability

When there is lack of transparency from the government, public begin to lose faith in the government. Government shall ensure proper transparency and accountability of public funds, promote anti-corruption measures and ensure access to economic data of the country. This can help government earn public trust which can promote political stability ultimately making a nation more secure.

Adequate foreign exchange reserves

A country shall have adequate foreign exchange reserves to respond to emergencies such as currency devaluation, pandemic, paying for imports during economic shocks, etc. These reserves make a country stronger stabilizing the economy and act as a safety net thereby ensuring national security.

Conclusion

Financial crises are not only the issues of banks, businesses, or central banks but rather of the whole country. They have the power to affect the whole country's safety and stability. A collapse of the economy leads to a situation where the government cannot provide proper defense, public services, and the necessary resources to respond to an emergency. In such situations, public debt rises, people lose employment, business begins to fail, and people begin to question the current government leading to instability and political chaos.

The cases of Asian Financial crisis and Sri Lankan economic crisis represent how an economic crisis can weaken the government, cause huge protest and gatherings against the government and, eventually increase of threats coming from outside. This helps us to understand that a stable economy is the foundation of a secure country.

In order to safeguard national security, it is necessary that countries take appropriate financial decisions and measures. This requires the implementation of strict regulations for banks, preparation for unforeseen situations, and ensuring that the economy is varied and stable. Sound financial status is the key to a country's continued independence, safety and security.

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The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Reshaping Disaster Management in Nepal: Enhancing Preparedness, Response and Recovery



✉ **Prakash Bista**

Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has made its way up to be an integral component in the processing of disaster responses. Nepal, located in a seismically active zone with fragile geology and steep topography, alongside the country which faces, severe water induced disasters like flood and landslides every year, can utilize AI to a great extent for enhancing its predictive capability, operational synchronization, and overall disaster risk reduction framework. This study deals with the use of AI in disaster management. By taking into account the international best practices, policy documents, and various literatures on disaster management, the research argue AI tools like machine learning, GIS (geographic information system) analytics, drones and UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) can facilitate real-time decision-making and enhance the efficiency of resources during the catastrophe.

Through the analysis of AI powered landslide forecasting, machine learning enabled river-flow prediction and deep learning models for seasonal hazard mapping this paper argues that AI offers a platform to shift from traditional scheme of hazard response to early risk anticipation system. This study also investigates using big data analytics AI has the transformative potential to create proactive, predictive and resilient system.

Research further points out that AI, through use of big data sources brings the promise of boosting efficiency and ability to foresee potential risk, yet downsides of the technology such as ethical, infrastructural, and policy barriers still possess a great challenge which can be mitigated by adopting transparent design, keeping human in the loop to authorize ethical judgment and value data protection and privacy.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Disaster Response, Strategic Preparedness, Resilience, Nepal.

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Introduction

Nepal sits on an unstable geological fault line making it one of the most disaster prone countries in the world. The mountainous terrain, fragile ecosystems and unplanned development has made it more susceptible to disasters like earthquakes, structure fires and wild fires, landslides and floods including glacier lake outburst flood (GLOF). Furthermore, the risks are compounded by the country's poor infrastructure, tough and frequently inaccessible terrain, and poor communication among agencies, all of which have made disaster preparedness and response ineffective (MoHA, 2023). From mid 2018 to mid 2024 only Nepal had experienced 32,375 disaster incidents causing 2999 deaths, 446 missing and with overall direct loss of NPR 23.6 billion (MoHA, 2025). The very statistics confirms the reality of Nepal and where it stands in terms of natural calamities.

However, when it comes to reducing the impact of disaster by analyzing vulnerability, managing lands and preparing adverse event to save lives and protect livelihood, Nepal's disaster risk reduction (DRR) policy is central framework which is primarily guided by disaster risk reduction and management act 2017 and national policy and strategic action plan for disaster risk reduction and management 2018-2030 (Government of Nepal, 2018). This action plan has identified priority sectors and objectives to provide a clear national vision to deal with calamities in three different levels of governance. To build proactive, adaptative and efficient disaster management ecosystem, Nepal needs to leverage data driven decision making enhanced connectivity and automation by implementing smart systems and emerging technologies (Dixit et. al. 2024).

Globally there is a rapid shift in lifting up disaster management capacity moving away from static, reactive systems to response centric effort (Siddiqui, 2024). AI has been used to analyze satellite images, spatial data, and live environmental data to predict risks like earthquake, landslides and floods at a much higher level of accuracy, to coordinate real-time responses and to accelerate recovery with unprecedented precision. The consignment of such a forecasting system would enable the stakeholders to stockpile supplies at strategic places, organize rescue teams, and train the evacuation process in areas most likely to be affected by the disaster, even before its occurrence.

Further, AI entails larger consequences for institutional resilience and strategic preparedness. AI tools can help in identifying threats for risk evaluation; improve the management of logistics and supply chains and increase the ability to coordinate with agencies during crises. With AI-enabled forecasting, risk analysis, and coordinated response systems, Nepal not only can augment disaster preparedness but can efficiently handle the humanitarian needs during the time disaster.

Review of Literature

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in disaster management has become an important academic subject, showcasing itself as force multiplier to dealing with every spectrum of disasters, i.e., preparedness, response, and recovery as and when it occurs. AI is acknowledged all over for its potential to analyze extensive and intricate datasets, providing predictions,

and backing up quick, evidence-based decision-making in emergencies (Russell & Norvig, 2021). In the sector of calamity management, AI-powered solutions such as the ones based on machine learning, geospatial analysis, remote sensing, and monitoring systems that operate in real-time have proved their worth extensively when it comes to detecting and predicting hazards like earthquakes, floods, and landslides. Technologies like these are credited for the reduction of both human and infrastructural losses as well as in the seamless distribution of emergency resources and coordination of response agencies (Zhou et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2021).

Scholarly literature, moreover, accentuates the importance of AI-enabled systems in bringing about the institutional capacity and operational readiness to the fore during complex emergencies. Cummings (2017) asserts that AI-assisted decision-making tools cut down the level of uncertainty and pave the way for quicker and more flexible responses in turbulent crisis settings. In this regard, Berenji and Vengerov (2018) also point out that the use of AI in disaster management, for instance in support of predictive maintenance, logistics optimization, and simulation-based scenarios, which is increasingly becoming the case for disaster response operations that require rapid mobilization and continuous logistical support. The incorporation of AI into the institutional framework denotes a larger shift from reactive response models to adaptive and anticipatory disaster management strategies.

Studies from the regions concentrating on South Asia highlight the importance of the incorporation of AI into disaster management systems in nations that experience a lot of disasters but have limited capacities to respond to them effectively. According to Shah and Rahman (2021), systems based on AI can be the main factor in achieving a balance between humanitarian response needs and institutional preparedness, in the regions that are most susceptible to disasters. During this regional setting, the peculiar geography of Nepal (characterized by steeply mountainous terrain, prone to earthquakes, and suffering from climate-related disasters) brings obstacles as well as a chance for the use of such technology in disaster management (Koirala, 2019).

Research Methodology

This study uses a qualitative research approach to investigate the effectiveness of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the disaster management and institutional preparedness frameworks of Nepal. Policy document on disaster risk reduction, post-disaster recovery framework, and best practices around the world are analyzed to examine efficacy of AI in the context of disaster. The thematic analysis applied to the data includes AI-enabled preparedness, early warning and risk forecasting, civil-military coordination, and resilience-building mechanisms.

Conceptual Overview

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a term which describes auto computing systems to handle tasks that require human-like thinking, perception, learning, and even decision-making. AI is used in the areas of defense and disaster management as a means to improve operational efficiency, speed, and accuracy (Russell & Norvig, 2021). AI analyzes huge amounts of data

from meteorology stations, satellites, drones, and mobile networks to predict weather and render situational maps that are beyond the ability of human analysts (Zhou et al., 2020).

Phase	Traditional Practice	AI-Enhanced Function
Preparedness	Manual data collection	Predictive analytics and simulations
Response	Reactive mobilization	Real-time situational mapping
Recovery	Paper-based reporting	Automated needs assessment
Mitigation	Limited data sharing	Integrated AI databases for multi-hazard modeling

Figure 1: AI-Enabled Disaster Management Cycle

Note. Figure conceptualized by author based on NDRRMA (2021) and UNDRR (2022).

Figure 1 shows the relationship between traditional disaster management cycle and AI based disaster management cycle which follows the similar four phases of cycle. The fundamental relationship that sets AI driven cycle out from traditional one is it transforms traditional cycle by altering its reactive manual process into pro active data driven and automated system. Predictive Analytics add up to the preparedness by predicting dangers and pointing out the region’s most prone to the same, while real-time mapping makes the response more efficient through quick situational awareness. Automated needs assessments cut short the recovery operations by giving the resource allocation a priority, and AI integrated databases make multi-hazard mitigation through better data sharing across the agencies. These AI-based competencies, in turn, create a disaster management system more resilient, adaptable, and coordinated, thereby reinforcing Nepal's national ability to prevent, react to, and recover after the occurrence of natural hazards.

Application of AI in Disaster management

Prevention and preparedness

Early warning; buying crucial seconds: Natural language processing (NLP) algorithm is increasingly used in early warning systems for disasters which transforms vast amounts of unstructured, human generated text into actionable intelligence. The application of NLP can extract information from social media and communication channels to reveal the areas of utmost distress. AI-powered virtual assistants and tools that analyze sentiment can keep track of the public in the cases of flooding or landslides, thus giving the authorities up-to-date knowledge of the situation in that area.

The android phone recently have developed a sensor which can detect initial P wave of an earthquake and send signal to the earthquake detection server along with rough location of where the shaking occurred (Stogaitis, 2025). This can warn as many people as possible before the slower and more damaging S wave of an earthquake reaches them. In 2023 when 6.7 magnitude earthquakes hit Philippines this system was able to sent out first alert in 18.3 second before the real quake started along with the people closest to the epicenter who received the early warning before 15 second.

Currently Google's Flood Hub an AI powered platform provides the flood forecasts up to seven days in advance (Matias, 2023). It has expanded the capabilities in more than 80 countries across India, Africa, Asia-pacific region Europe and South and Central America. Using such app governments, aid organizations, community and individual can take the timely and necessary action to deal with water induced risk.

Pre-disaster vulnerability assessment

According to tidal basin group expert insights published article "pre-disaster mitigation- a crucial step towards resilience" pre disaster vulnerability assessment is critical for identifying potential hazards, evaluating community risks and implementing targeted mitigation measures to enhance resilience. Integrating artificial intelligence and machine learning with geographic information system can enhance disaster preparedness and response through improved risk assessment, accurate prediction of extreme events and real time monitoring capabilities (Diehr J. et. al, 2024). It enables authority to allocate resources effectively, strengthen infrastructure and protect vulnerable population before disasters strike.

Hazard mapping for resilient planning a hazard map suggest where the intense impact occur. For example a flood hazard map does not just indicate which river has the maximum water flow; it shows which valley is going to be affected the most, where could be the maximum inundation and which place is best for the pre staging of relief material and rescue team. Moreover, AI can suggest the best routes for delivery of relief material and evacuation of the casualties if there are any. By analyzing historical quakes and topography the AI can identify high probability cluster along the major fault corridors.

Response and resource allocation

Rapid damage assessment and rescue and relief effort. AI can produce vast amount of data from drones and satellites in couple of minutes. By analyzing publicly available satellite images of the significantly impacted city in Turkey AI was able to demonstrate generalizable, accurate and efficient information which offered a significant aid for the country in rapid initial damage evaluation before first responders and damage assessment teams were dispatched (Soleimani and Babakmali, 2025). Similarly, technology like CLARKE (Computer vision and Learning for Analysis of Roads and Key Edifices) uses artificial intelligence and drone imagery to evaluate damage to building, roads and other infrastructure in a minute. It enables assessing of thousands of homes in just a matter of minutes. The system was very effective in Florida and Pennsylvania during Hurricanes Debby and Helene in 2024 (Henton, 2025).

AI applications, like supply chain optimization, route planning, and scenario simulations can improve the operational efficiency and coordination. AI has the ability to suggest the most favorable delivery and supply routes, categorize high-risk areas and also manipulate the deployment of resources in such a way that emergency aid is delivered to the affected populations as soon as possible without compromising the safety of the infrastructural

facilities. Development of these capabilities will not only speed up the response but also protect the property and enhance the cooperation between military and civilian sectors in disaster operations.

The 2015 Earthquake: A case study

On 25th April 2015 at 1156 local time, Nepal was struck by a huge 7.8 magnitude earthquake with its epicenter located in the Gorkha region about 80 KM northwest of Kathmandu. The earthquake had devastating effect on the life and property loss of Nepalese. Subsequent aftershocks including one of magnitude 7.3 near the Chinese border on 12 may produced additional losses of life and property. This earthquake alone had killed 8857 and injured over 22000 people (UNDP, 2016). Assessment showed that at least 498, 852 private houses and 2656 government building were destroyed. Another 256, 697 private houses and 3622 government buildings were partially damaged (Government of Nepal, 2016). The situation was even made worse when numerous landslides followed the disastrous shockwaves making rescue and relief effort more challenging in the already inaccessible mountain habitation. Over 47000 landslides and snow avalanches had severely affected the relief effort in the aftermath of 2015 earthquake of Nepal (Xu, 2018).

The mega disasters like 2015 earthquake are beyond the national capacity to respond as they strain financial, logistical and technical resources more than in any events. In the aftermath of 2015 earthquake 34 countries at the behest of Nepal had responded for the international support. This was translated into 76 search and rescue teams, 141 medical teams and 18 foreign military teams some with air assets (Cook et. al. 2018). The government of Nepal did so through the national disaster response framework 2013. While calling for international assistance the government failed to make preliminary assessment of its existing institutional capabilities in terms of strengths and weaknesses to deliver prompt emergency management. Subsequent result was a large number of incoming international military and non-military humanitarian aids became burden in terms of, coordinating their support and distribution (Shrestha & Pathranarakul, 2018).

A few recent projects, for instance, the national Seismic Early Warning System (that is created with the help of Japan), are mainly concerned with the sensor networks and alert distribution (NDRRMA, 2023). Yet during the time of 2015, Nepal lacked an operational and national-level earthquake early warning system (Kafle, 2017). Such system in practice, would have detected the first less destructive waves from the earthquake auto alerting the people. An early warning of 10-15 seconds is most valuable seconds for people to move to a safer place before the damaging shaking arrives.

Following the earthquake manual damage inspections were slow and hazardous and had to be relied on scattered information passed on by the victims or security forces on ground compounding the already distressed situation when national communication platform was non-existent. This process of initial assessment in the wake of 2015 earthquake was inefficient. The very perception of needs, breakage of communication platform and centralized approach to the response were hind sight of the efforts though immediately

made. According to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority of Nepal (NDRRMA), the situation of relief distribution during the 2015 Gorkha Earthquake was made worse by insufficient inter-agency coordination and lack of data on the affected areas (NDRRMA, 2021).

The Nepal army has been the most reliable national institution in any kind of national disaster. Its disciplined human resources, logistic back up and prerequisite skills have been a major resource during any kind of crises in the country. However, they along with other institutional systems such as central natural disaster relief committee, district disaster relief committee under Ministry of Home Affairs and regional healthcare facility had serious limitations that needs to be addressed (Shrestha & Pathranarakul, 2018). The Nepali Army, as soon as the earthquake struck, had set in motion a rescue and relief operation under “Operation Sankatmochan” deploying over 66,000 personnel (Nepali Army, 2015). The result was far impressive which enabled rescue of 1336 people alive, transport of 2928 people to nearest health care facilities using military helicopters and treatment of 85,954 from 14 most affected districts. But the setbacks of operation were also in the list as Nepali army had to use scattered resources caused due not enough forecasting (Pant, 2020).

For societies to become resilient they need to be prepared for both routine emergencies and crises (Manandhar, et. al, 2017). As the Nepal’s national DRRM strategic action plan 2018-2030 provides a comprehensive roadmap for DRR aligned with the SFDR and SDGs, it calls for risk informed public and private investment, gender and social inclusive policies and science and technology driven solution. It recognizes that resilience building must be community centered and driven by data that reflects local realities.

One of the biggest lessons from 2015 earthquake was that the buildings were destined to fail because of poor construction. A national building code (NBC) was developed in Nepal in 1994 but it was not widely implemented or was not mandatory before 2015. In Nepal’s case the NBC was efficient model but the problem lies with its implementation due to instable government, lack of understanding of seismic risk and means to address it (Arendt et. al., 2017). If the information of the building is accurate and up to date authorities can prioritize retrofitting or demolishing the most dangerous building long before a disaster strikes. Traditionally a method Rapid visual screening (RVS) is used to determine the damage potential that may occur during an impending earthquake and to take necessary actions to lessen the hazards (Bektas, 2024). Today a machine learning algorithm based RVS method can produce 40 percent more accurate information in this regard than the method which has been conventionally used.

AI and integration of such system in disaster risk reduction framework is efficient and reliable platform to analyze seismic and environmental data in real time to predict possible hazards impacts, and automatically facilitate evacuation and protective measures. AI, besides human safety, can be of help to locate and protect property at risk, by suggesting pre-emptive measures like shut down of utilities, reinforcement alert for buildings, and prioritization of high-value assets. AI along with predictive intelligence and civil-military coordination allows the quicker resource deployment to save both lives and property during earthquakes.

Framework for AI- Driven Disaster Resilience

For Nepal, The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR 2015-30) provides the policy structure for resilience. Yet AI acts as key emerging tool to implement these goals (Government of Nepal, 2018). The suggested Nepalese AI-Driven disaster reduction Framework describes a unified and forward-looking approach of combining technological advancements with national effort on humanitarian duty. The framework visualized consists of four mutually supportive pillars (Data Infrastructure and Sovereignty, Institutional Synergy and Command Integration, Ethical and Legal Governance, and Capacity Building and Innovation Ecosystem) that together create a robust and flexible defense structure.

The basic idea of Data Infrastructure and Sovereignty is to create an ecosystem where different sectors such as meteorology, hydrology, and geospatial information can share their data securely, through the use of interoperable and sovereign digital technologies. The creation of a National Data Grid (NDG) will, among other things, allow the combination of data from various sources in real-time, the use of predictive modeling, and the gaining of a clear view of the situation through AI-driven advanced analytics. By having encrypted and jurisdiction-specific cloud networks in place, Nepal would not only be able to maintain its technological independence but also be able to hold its cyber space, data, and national security safe from external threats while at the same time increasing its operational transparency and credibility.

Establishing a Joint Artificial Intelligence Command (JAIC-Nepal) that connects the Ministry of Defense (MoD), the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA), and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) would be fostering all-embracing civil-military coordination, speeding up the sharing of intelligence, and turning the scattered response systems into proactive, synchronized operations over the areas of disaster and defense.

The ethical, legal, and human resource aspects are equally important as they secure the sustainability, trust, and accountability of AI development. The creation of a National AI Ethics and Security Framework would set up the ground for transparent algorithms, human control, and ethical AI in monitoring, emergency management, and military operations. This type of regulation makes it possible for the use of AI to comply with human rights, humanitarian principles, and international security, thus nurturing trust among the public and being positively viewed by the diplomatic community.

These various, yet interdependent, pillars together create a comprehensive, efficient and futuristic structure integrating technology.

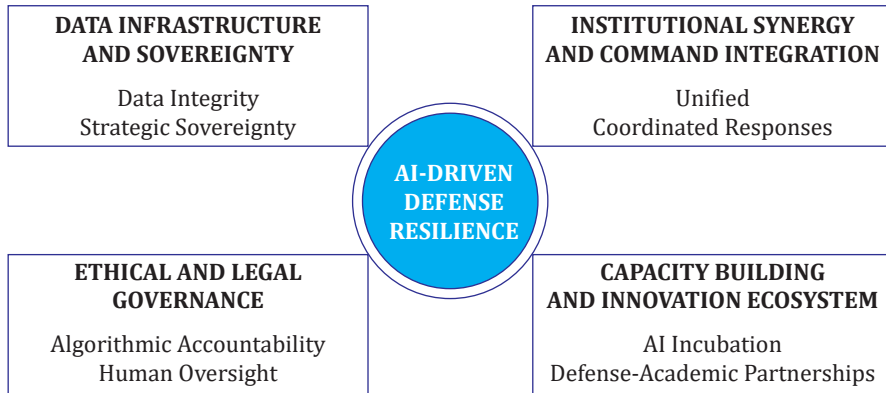


Figure 3: Conceptual Model of AI-Driven Disaster Resilience Framework in Nepal

This conceptual model provides a detailed framework for Nepal's AI-supported army and at the same time gives prime importance to data sovereignty and institutional coordination as the main factors in national resistance. It brings together partnerships with universities and creativity yet is still backed up by ethical governance and human supervision, thus making the use of AI both strategic and socially responsible.

Challenges

Ethical, Infrastructural, and Policy

As the integration of AI in disaster management has ample of advantages, some considerable challenges yet still exist. As AI uses loads of data, images and messages various platform to produce actionable information some pressing issue of its use have been the privacy of data, algorithmic biasness and inequitable resource allocation (Wood, 2025).

System trained on historical data could align with the same data showing biasness in the context of new event. For example, if one particular place with certain requirement in the system was prioritized in prior crisis same requirement could again be prioritized by AI in the context of new crisis over-looking the factual requirement of present time.

Similarly, a predictive flood models for flat terrain might not be able to predict the flooding in Nepal's steep river valleys accurately, thus highlighting the danger of algorithmic bias if AI is trained on the foreign dataset particularly non mountainous one (Koirala, 2019). In another context, for the country dependent on imported technology and systems, data sovereignty, cyber security, and unethical surveillance could be a matter of great concern, increasing the risk of misuse (Adhikari, 2022).

Sophisticated technology infrastructure, which comprises high quality computing capabilities, stable power sources and continuous internet connectivity are prerequisite for the efficient functioning of AI (Ansari et. al. 2025). Nepal, as an emerging digital economy has recognized the importance of AI and formulated the national AI policy 2081 to provide a strategic framework for AI development, governance and utilization (Government of Nepal,

2025). Capacity building is yet another major challenge; in order for the AI-ready human resources to be developed. Targeted educational reforms, university collaborations, and cutting-edge training programs for military personnel, disaster managers, and civil service workers are critical requirement to enhance digital literacy and explore the transformative potential of AI (Vincent, Kumar, & Singh, 2022).

At the institutional level, the relations between the Ministry of Defense (MoD), the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA), and the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (MoCIT) are still sideways. The disconnection that exists between the institutions does not allow for the creation of a single national strategy that would benefit both the military and civilians in terms of collaboration and efficiency (Pant, 2020).

Interoperability and Integration with existing system

During disaster most efficient response is when coordination among all the stakeholders i.e., government agencies, non-governmental organizations, community and different crisis group involves (Ansari et. al. 2025). The very purpose of expediting the effort, easing the coordination and tightening communication loop could be hampered if AI conflicts with existing system of disaster management.

Data accessibility and reliability

The power engine of the AI system is its high quality, dependable and diversified data. Yet a major challenge for AI in disaster management could be its power engine itself that is how data from different sources- satellites, drones, sensors and field reports is gathered and shared. Some studies have found out that most commonly used computer vision, natural language processing and audio data sets are susceptible to significant labeling errors i.e., computers cannot identify the image, text and audio in correct manner (Northcutt, C. G. et. al, 2021). Hence if the AI system is trained with inaccurate, incomplete and biased data the system is likely to cascade these already mistaken data for further processing. In plain language, if the quality of data is poor the outcome of the AI system will be poor. During the time of crisis, as real time data accessibility cannot be guaranteed due to sensitivity of the situation, result could lead to faulty predictions as well as decreased effectiveness in AI system.

Findings

The analysis of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in disaster response and military security within Nepal reveals several critical insights.

High Disaster Frequency Requires Predictive Systems

Nepal's designation as a country with recurrent natural hazards is very much justified as it has to face floods, landslides, GLOFs, and earthquakes among the other natural calamities mentioned above frequently and consistently. The history illustrates that the annual statistics of such events could range from thousands and that their impacts could be felt seriously in terms of loss of life, money, and infrastructures. Traditional methods of reacting after the

disaster is not efficient method to handle the mega disaster like 2015 earthquake. Machine learning-based forecasting systems would provide the necessary early warning, plan the evacuation very well, and also allocate resources in a targeted way so that both human and material losses can be minimized.

Global Precedents Highlight Feasible Models

International experiences such as Japan's earthquake monitoring systems and AI-based flood forecasting in India have the potential to be adapted to the topography and socio-economic context of Nepal. These cases demonstrate that AI can lower response times, enhance operational efficiency, and facilitate inter-agency coordination, thus offering important insights for local use.

Institutional and Infrastructure Gaps Pose Major Challenges

Digital infrastructure is one of the main problems in Nepal, which is accompanied by poor-quality sensor networks, slow data processing, and a lack of trained personnel. Coordination between the Ministry of Defense, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA), and other parties is usually disjointed, which in turn hampers the speed of the operations, and consequently, overall emergency preparedness and resilience.

Ethical, Legal, and Policy Considerations are Critical

The use of AI technologies in Nepal is raising major ethical and legal concerns such as bias in algorithms, dual-use risks, privacy violation, and security of online data. At present, the policy frameworks that regulate the application of AI in military and aid sectors are not yet fully developed, which highlights the necessity for complete regulatory supervision to support the environmental, ethical, and responsible use of AI technologies in Nepal.

Way Forward

Based on the findings, this research introduces a multi-level strategic framework for boosting Nepal's AI-oriented disaster management and defense strength. The suggestions focus on upgrading infrastructure, better cooperation among institutions, creating more skilled workers, ethical governance, and involvement of community in the process.

Invest in AI-Ready Infrastructure

Nepal ought to make it a point to develop infrastructures that are AI-compatible and technologically advanced. This would include the establishment of extensive meteorological, hydrological, and geospatial sensor networks as well as ensuring the uninterrupted collection of accurate data. The use of secure cloud-based platforms for real-time monitoring and analytics can reinforce predictive modeling and situational awareness which would result in the timely interventions during disasters. The incorporation of these systems into the defense command centers would facilitate the move from reactive response to anticipatory and proactive operations.

Develop Institutional Coordination Mechanisms

The idea of setting up a Joint Artificial Intelligence Command (JAIC-Nepal) would not only attract international collaboration but also make the implementation of various AI projects in Nepal easier and more effective. Ministry of Defense (MoD), National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA), Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) and national universities all working together would result in a joint venture of the best minds. Data-sharing norms need to be established across all the agencies involved so that there would be no inconsistency and confusion in the use of the data in times of emergency or security operations.

Capacity Building and Human Resource Development

The strategic enhancement of capacity is the main factor to keep up with the AI integration. The military, disaster management, and civil administration workers should receive special training programs in the areas of AI, machine learning, and data analytics. The establishment of AI research laboratories at universities in partnership with the Nepali Army and defense academies can not only promote local innovation but also provide solutions that are tailored to the specific challenges posed by Nepal's geography and human population.

Ethical and Legal Governance Framework

AI systems have a dual-use nature. That is, they can be used both for civilian and defense purposes. Therefore, more than ever, the ethics and the law have to keep a very close watch over AI system usage. Nepal should create a full legal framework for AI use that focuses on issues like accountability of algorithms, privacy of data, transparency, and civilian control. Ethical review boards within institutions can be a mechanism to confirm that the use of AI in the public sector is in line with the values of the national constitution and international humanitarian principles.

Pilot AI Projects and Technology Transfer

In the high-risk districts, pilot projects should make use of AI for forecasting floods, predicting landslides, and optimizing logistics coordination. The schemes can be regarded as experimental grounds for improving algorithms and finding out the best practices. Moreover, Nepal should take advantage of International military and technical collaboration to ease the transfer of AI technology, its adaptation to the local context, and the joint development of disaster and defense systems.

Community Engagement and Local Integration

The adoption of AI should be a process that embraces the whole society, is based on the existing culture, and takes local situations into account. The combination of native people's wisdom and AI-powered forecasts can lead to the improvement of trust within the community and precision of context. It is a must that localized early warning systems make it possible for the people living in the most isolated regions and being the most at risk to hear alerts that are not only timely but also easy to understand. This way, both the safety of humans and the protection of property would be fully maximized.

If these suggestions are implemented, then Nepal will be able to set up a strong, AI-based disaster and defense ecosystem that is not only technologically advanced but also ethically governed, and socially inclusive. Besides, it will put the country in the spotlight as a model for resilient disaster management in areas that are both prone to hazards and limited in resources.

Conclusion

AI technologies are progressively transforming the humanitarian field. Their potential to support humanitarian action beyond reactive to anticipatory approaches is a laudable affair in recent modern days. Leveraging the potential of AI mainly in three dimensions: preparedness, response and recovery, Nepal can derive considerable advantages in disaster management. The challenges of limited infrastructure, human resource capacity, and institutional readiness do exist for the country like Nepal, but investment in the right infrastructure, skill development, and inter-agency coordination, can offer maximum benefits eventually contributing to the humanitarian action.

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Importance of Border Area Development Program (BADP) in Border Security of Nepal



 **Yukesh Upreti**


Abstract

This paper examines the importance of the Border Area Development Program (BADP) as major instrument for strengthening border security of Nepal. The core objective of this paper is to illustrate scope and importance of BADP for strengthening border security of Nepal. The study adopts a qualitative approach with a descriptive and analytical research design which is entirely based on secondary data derived from government documents, policy reports and scholarly literature related on border area development and border governance. The analysis identifies five major thematic contributions of BADP, i.e. winning the hearts and minds of border populations, enhancing physical security infrastructure, controlling cross-border crimes, increasing revenue support and strengthening civil–security cooperation. The findings indicate that BADP have contributed in reduction of cross-border crimes and enhanced harmonic civil relation. The data shows that physical security have improved and cross border crimes have reduced after undergoing BADP in Nepal. Accordingly, the paper recommends the institutionalization of BADP from a national security and governance perspective to ensure sustainable, integrated and people-centric border security in Nepal.

Keywords: Border, security, development, cooperation, citizens

Introduction

With the change in the globalized dimension in the world, the concept of borderless world also has emerged as a burning issue. World governing institute stresses on the structural change in borderland areas of the nations (WCO, 2010; WTO, 2018). To smooth the trade flows and enhance the national security, the necessity of border area development has been recommended by different reports (Javaid, 2021). Different scholarly articles emphasize Border Area Development Program (BADP) as an infrastructural reformation with a primary objective of enhancing infrastructure, improve the quality of life and promote a sense of security among the border populations. (Upreti, 2022; Pulami: 2023).

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Scholarly literatures emphasize BADP as an infrastructural incentives aimed at improving physical connectivity, service delivery and the quality of life of border populations for enhancing national security (Upreti, 2022; Pulami, 2023). Studies by Shrestha (2018) and Baral (2016) highlight deficiencies in border infrastructure, welfare services and living conditions at border area of Nepal.

In response to these dynamics, border governance models have increasingly adopted a functionalist approach, within which BADP has emerged as a critical component (Sharma & Hausner, 2013). Recognizing these essentials, the Government of Nepal (GON) initiated the BADP in 2015 for strategic, administrative and operational necessity (GON, 2015). However, despite its essentials, BADP could not sustain. There remains a notable literature gap, concerning the effectiveness and security implications of BADP in Nepal. Hence this study is conducted to address this gap by examining the importance of the BADP in strengthening the border security of Nepal. This research seeks to rationalize BADP as a strategic instrument for enhancing state presence, community resilience, and sustainable border governance in Nepal.

Literature Review

The BADP is essential for enhancing the security and socio-economic development of border regions by focusing on infrastructure development, promoting economic activities, fostering cross-border cooperation and engaging local communities (IPC, 2009). BADP enhances the ability of security forces to monitor and manage border activities effectively. BADP is important for countries like India and Nepal, where maintaining the integrity and security of borders is crucial for national security (Xavier, 2020). BADP solve tensions and disagreements among the cross-border residents. Nepal has sought to balance its relations with both India and China, adding complexity to the relationship and such programs are the means to solve the problems (Pulami, 2023). BADP initiatives focus on providing essential infrastructure, such as schools, healthcare facilities, and drinking water supply systems, which significantly improve the quality of life in these areas (Sinha, 2020). Border area development and border security are linked and significant as effective BADP can contribute to enhanced border security by addressing socio-economic disparities that can contribute to instability and conflict along international boundaries (Martin, 2018; Mishra, 2018; ADB, 2020; Iqbal, 2019; Pulami, 2023)

Existing studies emphasize that BADP contributes to economic growth through enhanced infrastructure, trade facilitation by improving access to social services such as health and education (World Bank, 2018; ADB, 2020). It strengthens border security by curbing illicit activities and promotes regional integration and cooperation (IOM, 2019; UNDP, 2021). (Niti Ayog, 2015). From these reviewed literature and emerging thematic findings of this study, the researcher discusses rationale of BADP and its necessity for Nepal border governance.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research approach with a descriptive and exploratory research design to achieve the stated research objectives. A qualitative approach is considered appropriate as the study seeks to develop an in-depth understanding of BADP by interpreting contextual realities rather than measuring variables quantitatively. The research is entirely based on secondary data, drawing upon a wide range of documented sources relevant to border area development and governance. Other sources of data include government reports, policy documents and official publications of the Armed Police Force, Nepal. The collected secondary data were analyzed using thematic analysis to synthesize insights from diverse documents and to justify findings through triangulation of data from different secondary sources.

Findings

The GoN launched the BADP in 2016 as a five-year initiative to promote agricultural productivity, physical infrastructure and enhance the socio-economic capacities of border communities in districts like Mahottari, Saptari, Siraha, Dhanusha, Sarlahi, Rautahat, Bara and Parsa. The program adopted a decentralized planning approach to formulate development plans based on local needs and community recommendations. The Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development stressed that BADP was strategically designed to address the comparatively low Human Development Index of Nepal eastern and mid-terai regions with emphasis on border populations. Additionally, this program consists a wide range of activities such as road construction, irrigation, drinking water and sanitation, agriculture, energy development, environmental conservation and capacity-building initiatives. Despite its strategic relevance, the program could not be sustained, resulting in the neglect of border governance from a development perspective.

In this context, APF Nepal restored BADP by re-initiating border-focused development and engagement activities through awareness campaigns, civic action programs, community interactions and facilitation initiatives, which have demonstrated tangible and positive outcomes in border areas. Based on the institutional experiences and documented sources of the APF Nepal, the following key themes provide the rationale for the BADP as an integral component of Nepal's border governance.

Theme 1: BADP focused on winning the hearts of Border Population

APF Nepal have prime mandate in border security of Nepal. APF Nepal is always focused in BADP with an aim to intensify the border security. This activity has been considered as crucial for the Nepal-India border regions as it addresses socio-economic disparities by improving infrastructure, education, healthcare, and livelihood opportunities, thereby enhancing the living conditions of border communities. This program strengthens security and cross-border cooperation by improving border management and security measures, aiding joint efforts between Nepal and India to combat crime and smuggling. It also supports cultural heritage preservation and people-to-people exchanges, which promote mutual understanding and cooperation. These efforts strengthen the bonds between the two countries, benefiting the target groups and achieving the objectives outlined below.

Table 1: Ongoing Border Area Development Activities and its target group and scope

S.N.	Activities	Target Group	Scope
1	APF with border citizens	Local level ward Representative, local level agencies, local citizens and youth.	APF and civil society relation enhancement, Civil Order, Local Security and Infrastructure Development
2	Awareness Program	All Border Citizens	Social Welfare, skilling and Empowerment.
3	Interaction with ward Chairman	Ward chairman, Member of local government in Border area.	Cross-Border Cooperation and Cultural Exchange, Cross-Border Cooperation and Cultural Exchange, Local Security.
4	Civic Actions	All Border Citizens	Area Familiarization
5	Border Facilitation Committee	Border Governing Agencies	Information sharing and problem Mechanism.
6	Health Camp	Medical Facility Required Group	Social Welfare
7	Skilling Training	Youths	Social Welfare, skilling and Empowerment
8	Construction Support	Vulnerable and marginalized Group	Infrastructure Development.

Source: APF Nepal Border Security Department. (2025)

The Table 1 outlines various activities undertaken by the APF Nepal in collaboration with border citizens as part of the BADP. These activities include enhancing relations between the APF and local civil society, maintaining civil order and contributing to local security and infrastructure development. Awareness programs target all border citizens to promote social welfare, skills development and empowerment. Interactions with ward chairmen focus on cross-border cooperation, cultural exchange and local security. Civic actions involve familiarizing the APF Nepal with the area and its residents. The border facilitation committee, comprising specified members, addresses information sharing and problem resolution. Health camps provide medical facilities to groups in need, while skill training programs aim to empower the youth. Lastly, construction support is directed towards vulnerable and marginalized groups to aid in infrastructure development.

Theme 2: Enhancement of Physical Security

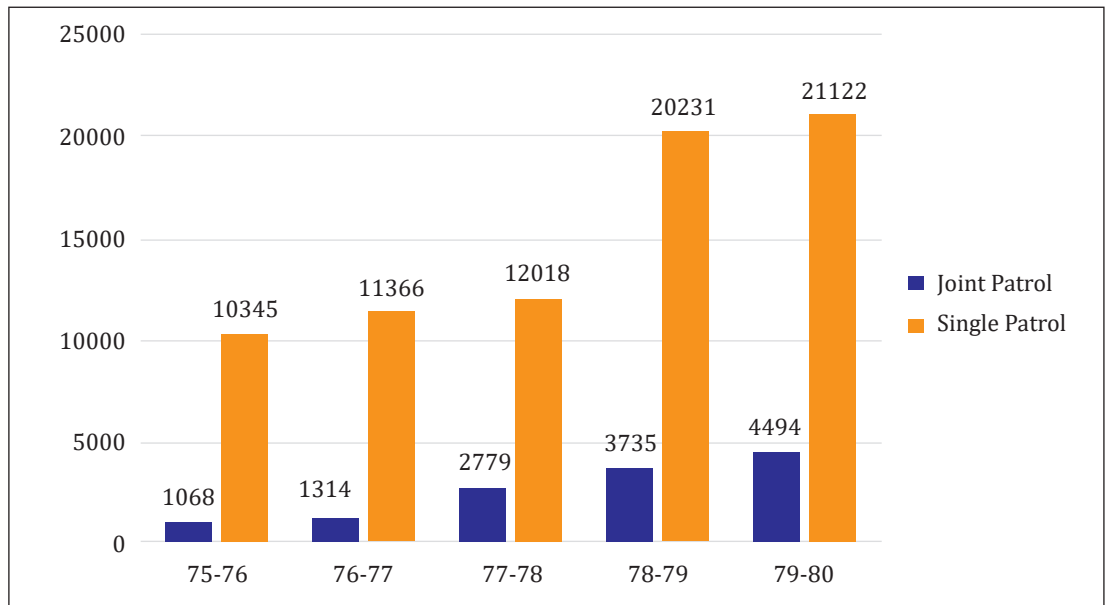
The fundamental aspect of physical security in the context of border security is the protection of border areas through physical measures designed to prevent unauthorized access, detect and deter illegal activities, and safeguard critical infrastructure (Jones, 2016).

It includes a range of tools and strategies, including barriers, surveillance systems, patrols and technological solutions. These measures are essential for maintaining the integrity of national borders, ensuring the safety of citizens, and preventing illegal activities such as smuggling, trafficking, and terrorism (Gates, 2011).

In border security, physical barriers such as walls, fences and bollards are among the most common forms of physical security. They serve as the first line of defense, preventing unauthorized crossings and directing movement to controlled points of entry. Surveillance is a critical aspect of border security. Regular patrols by security personnel, both on foot and using vehicles, are essential for maintaining a visible security presence and responding quickly to incidents. Checkpoints are strategically placed along borders and major routes to inspect individuals and vehicles, ensuring that only authorized personnel and goods cross the border.

Physical security measures are crucial for preventing illegal crossings and smuggling activities. Intelligence and surveillance systems make it difficult for individuals to cross borders undetected, which helps curb illegal immigration, drug trafficking and the movement of contraband. These activities are concerned with civic relationship. A well-implemented BADP helps build relationships with civil authorities, facilitating real-time intelligence and providing support for our security operations. Five-year data on APF Nepal's border security strategy covering physical security, cross-border crime, revenue support, and civil support has been analyzed.

Fig 1: Border area Patrolling



Source: APF Nepal Border Security Department, (2025)

The Figure 1 illustrates the number of joint patrol and single patrol operations conducted over five years of period. The figure demonstrates a steady increase in both joint and single patrol operations over the given periods, with a more pronounced growth in single patrols compared to joint patrols. The impact of BADP can be felt in operational activities of APF Nepal.

Theme 3: Control Border Crimes

The BADP and efforts to control border crimes are deeply interconnected, with each influencing the success and effectiveness of the other. The BADP focus on the socio-economic development of border regions, addresses many of the underlying issues that contribute to border crimes such as smuggling, human trafficking, and illegal immigration (Andreas, 2010). By improving the infrastructure, education, healthcare, and economic opportunities in these areas, the BADP reduces the incentives for local populations to engage in illegal activities. This holistic approach to development not only improves the quality of life for border communities but also strengthens social cohesion and trust in governmental institutions, making it less likely that these communities will tolerate or participate in border crimes (Jones, 2016).

An effective control of border crimes positively impacts the goals of the BADP. When border areas are secure and free from the influence of criminal networks, development projects can proceed without disruption. This stability attracts investment and promotes economic activities, which are essential for sustainable development. Additionally, a secure border environment raises trust between neighboring countries, leading to enhanced cross-border cooperation in areas such as trade, cultural exchange and joint security initiatives. This cooperation further contributes to the socio-economic development of border regions. After the successful implementation of BADP, the success rate in neutralizing cross-border crime has been steadily improving, as shown below.

Table 2: Table of Physical security

Fiscal Year	Weapons Seized	Explosives Seized	Vehicles Seized	Arrested
75-76	33	0	15	29
76-77	30	0	13	46
77-78	35	0	15	44
78-79	27	12	16	48
79-80	27	0	16	67

Source: APF Nepal Border Security Department (2025)

The Table 2 presents data over five time periods and categorizes information into four distinct groups. From down to up, weapons seized, explosives seized, vehicles seized, and arrested. A notable change occurred in 78-79, where there were 27 weapons seized, 12 explosives seized, 16 vehicles seized, and 48 arrested individuals. Finally, in the period 79-80, the numbers are 27 weapons seized, 0 explosives seized, 16 vehicles seized, and a significant increase to 67 Arrested. The table shows increment in number at 79-80. This

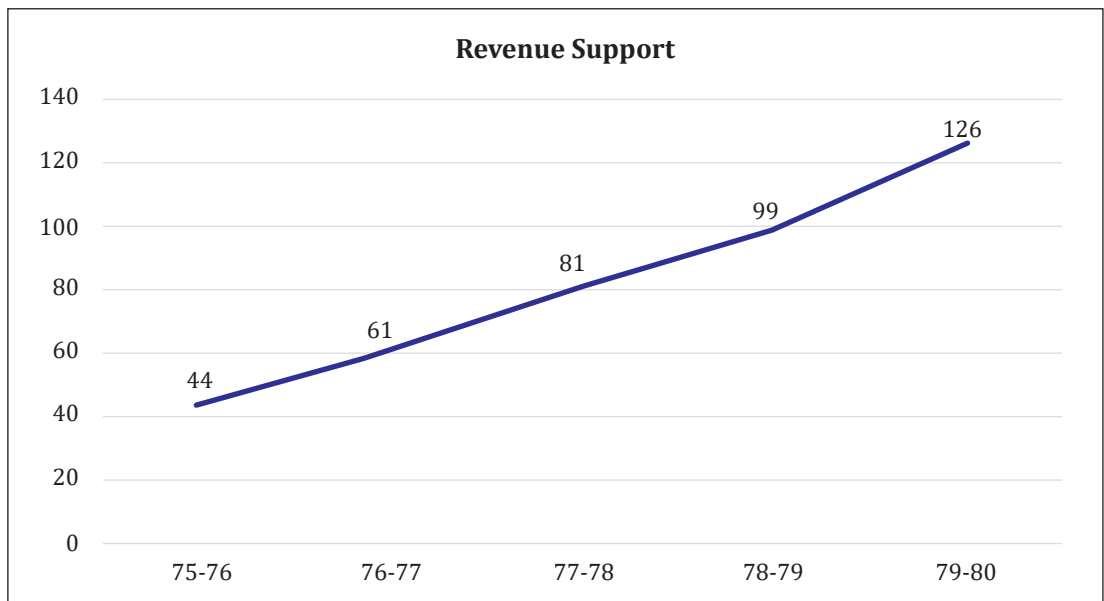
proves that, BADP has significant impact in border security. The table indicates fluctuations in each category across the periods, with the most significant increase seen in the number of arrested individuals from 75-76 to 79-80.

Theme 4: Enhance Revenue Support

BADP plays a crucial role in generating revenue support through various channels, thereby contributing to the overall economic growth and development of border regions. It promotes economic growth and trade in border areas by investing in infrastructure, skill development, agricultural support, and local economies. It also enhances social welfare, economic empowerment, and revenue collection in these regions. The program also strengthens relations between APF Nepal and local communities through various skill development initiatives in rural border areas, which in turn contribute to higher agricultural tax revenues.

Furthermore, by promoting investment through public-private partnerships and attracting foreign direct investment, the BADP stimulates economic growth and generates additional tax revenues for the government. The BADP comprehensive approach is to improve the quality of life in border regions and strengthen Nepal’s revenue development across the country.

Fig 2: Revenue Support Chart



Source: APF Nepal Border Security Department (2025)

The Figure 2 displays the trend of revenue support over five time periods in millions. The figure shows a steady increase in revenue support over these years. The figure demonstrates a consistent and substantial support by APF Nepal in revenue support over the five years, with the most notable increase occurring between the last two periods.

Theme 5: Civil Support

In Nepal, the relationship between civil support and the BADP is a fundamental program for border governance. Civil support is the active involvement, cooperation and engagement of local communities, civil society organizations, and governmental bodies in planning, implementing and sustaining BADP initiatives. This partnership ensures that development efforts are responsive to the unique needs and priorities of border community and empowerment among local residents. By leveraging local knowledge and resources, civil support enhances the effectiveness of BADP projects, promoting inclusive growth, social cohesion and sustainable development. Community participation strengthens accountability and transparency in project implementation to monitoring progress and ensuring that resources are used efficiently. This collaborative approach not only improves infrastructure, livelihoods and services in border areas but also builds resilience against socio-economic challenges. Currently APF Nepal is manning help desk and health desk to aware locals on disaster management and hygiene and sanitation program. This program aims to win the heart and mind of people residing in the areas.

General Discussion

The research findings revealed the importance of BADP on all the major aspect of border security. Border security in Nepal is critical due to its long borders with India and China. Well governing the borders requires infrastructure, modern technology like surveillance drones and communication systems and promotion of bilateral cooperation with neighboring countries. These activities are linked to BADP, which helps harmonize the relationship between civic and APF Nepal."

While BADP has significantly improved infrastructure and economic conditions in Nepal's border areas, continued efforts are essential to ensure sustainable development. Future improvements could include increased funding, greater community engagement in planning and implementing projects and robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure BADP effectiveness. By addressing these aspects, the BADP can continue to play a vital role in enhancing the border governance and strengthening national security. The improvement in physical security under BADP is considered a positive indicator for border security, as it has led to a decrease in cross-border crime. It is therefore, necessary to continue this program not only from APF Nepal perspective but from national perspective.

Conclusion

The scope of BADP is focused on civic engagement, infrastructure development, cross-border cooperation, cultural exchange, local security, social welfare and infrastructural development. Border area development is a complicated task. Different challenges like budgetary issues, proper implementation of administrative law, lack of adequate knowledge and organizational capabilities are some independent variables which have affected continuation of BADP program in Nepal. BADP can be considered crucial aspect of national security and economic growth, given Nepal's strategic location between India and China.

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