



## Press release

### Centre for Nepal Studies UK (CNSUK)'s 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

The Centre for Nepal Studies UK (CNSUK) has now entered its tenth year and there is, therefore, much to celebrate with our well-wishers, partners, collaborators, and friends. As is evident from our work, CNSUK is primarily an academic and a research organisation, dedicated to advancing knowledge on Nepalis in the UK, focused mainly on social research and advocacy. Volunteerism and collaboration within and beyond the community are the core aspects of CNSUK's modus operandi.

By 2006 the nascent Nepali community in the UK was growing fast. In order to promote the presence and recognition of the Nepali community in the UK, several of us realised then that there was a need for a thinktank dedicated to serious and systematic research on the Nepali community. A like-minded group of PhD graduates from British universities and highly-skilled migrants in the UK came together to form the CNSUK. The first and foremost agenda of CNSUK was to carry out a large-scale community research project aimed at establishing the size and demographic characteristics of Nepalis in the UK. This project, which became known popularly as a census, was executed in 2008 in collaboration with the Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) UK, and hundreds of other leading individuals and community organisations.

What followed in successive years was a series of other successful research and advocacy initiatives including the Vernacular Religion (diaspora religiosity) project in partnership with the University of Oxford (2009-11); a campaign promoting participation of the Nepali community in the UK census (2011); a review of Gurkha Pension Policies (2012-13); and a study of social mobility and ethnic minority (2015-16). These initiatives have resulted in several important publications such as: four volumes of directory of Nepalis in the UK (2010, 2011, 2013, 2015); a book entitled *Nepalis in the United Kingdom: An Overview* (2012); a book on the first Nepali in the UK, Motilal Singh (2013); and *British Gurkha Pension Policies and Ex-Gurkha Campaigns: A Review* (2013). In order to disseminate our research findings we have published substantially in Nepali papers, online portals, journals, and magazines. We have also published special issues of newsletters. We often provide free research advice and technical inputs to organisations and other individuals in line with our motto of enhancing the knowledge on the Nepali diaspora and of Nepal itself.

We have collaborated with both Nepali and British governmental and non-governmental organisations. Similarly, our academic partners in the UK include Britain-Nepal Academic Council (where CNSUK has a seat for representation), the University of Oxford, and the University of Southampton. We organise occasional and thematic seminars and workshops. Our important past events include workshop on 'Securing Research Funding and Getting into Academic Job in the UK' (2008), 'Nepal Study Days' (2012), and workshop on the 'Future of the Nepali Youths in the UK' (2016). We have supported several academicians and researchers with information and advice regarding the Nepali diaspora and Nepal. We have offered mentorship, advice and (co) supervision to Masters and PhD students doing research in the fields of our expertise, and we will continue to do so. In the course of sharing knowledge and advocating rights of, and recognition for, the Nepali



community, we have delivered lectures in various venues ranging from the British Parliament to policy symposiums and academic conferences.

Although the major focus has been on the UK Nepali diaspora, CNSUK has also run small projects in Nepal. Through prestigious British media, we were extensively engaged in raising awareness, sharing knowledge, and appealing for help when the disastrous earthquakes hit Nepal in 2015. On our own initiative and with our own personal funding, and taking advantage of a field-level partnership with a Nepali NGO, RSDC (Swabalamban), we successfully built two primary schools in Nuwakot district and handed them over in record time. In order to celebrate the 200 years of Britain-Nepal relations, in 2016 we set up the Motilal Singh scholarship to help a Nepali student in Nepal to write his or her Master's dissertation. Our aim is to support future researchers in the field of social sciences and improve the quality of research taking place in Nepali universities. In order to sustain this important contribution we are looking for potential benefactors interested in collaborating in this important area.

In order to commemorate these achievements, we would like to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with our community and partners, and are organizing a special programme on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2017. Our focus is on the social mobility of ethnic minorities in the UK and to help our communities integrate further as part of the wider society. Through our ongoing research, we seek to understand the current position and future outlook of the community, as well as to stimulate social, economic and political participation within the wider society. To this end, we recently organised a workshop on the future of Nepali youth in the UK. Moreover, we are planning a workshop on the future of political and civic participation. We also aim to promote Nepal studies and academic innovation within the diaspora by bringing established and aspiring Nepali scholars together for serious discussion and mutual learning. Our plans for 2017 include the publication of a special issue of our newsletter and an open-access academic journal with its first issue as a thematic edition on the Gurkhas. We hope to bring out a second and expanded edition of the book *Nepalis in the United Kingdom*, as well as a bilingual edition of the book on Motilal Singh. In future we aim to expand our horizons by carrying out research beyond Nepalis in the UK and in Nepal.

Finally, we would like to reaffirm our commitment to work with our partners, collaborators, researchers, and individuals in the coming days and hope that together we can deliver change for the betterment of Nepal and all Nepalis. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all volunteers, supporters, advisors, and members involved in our activities over the years. As ever, we are open to good ideas and future collaboration. We at the CNSUK would be happy to provide a platform for interested and committed researchers.

Thank you for helping CNSUK grow and come this far. Your continued assistance will help us to build it as a sustainable Nepali organisation. We look forward to an even brighter decade of research and advocacy to come.

Thank you very much.  
Centre for Nepal Studies UK