

# 57th Auspicious Birthday of His Majesty King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev and National Day of the Kingdom of Nepal



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His Majesty King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev

## Introduction to Nepal

**History**  
For centuries the Kingdom of Nepal was divided into many principalities. Kirats ruled in the east, the Newars in the Kathmandu Valley, while Gurungs and Magars occupied in the mid-west. The Kirats ruled from 300 BC and were followed by the Licchavis whose descendants today are believed to be the Newars of the Kathmandu Valley. During this period, art thrived in Nepal and many of the beautiful woodcarvings and sculptures that are found in the country belong to this era. With the end of the Licchavi dynasty, Malla kings came to power in 1200 AD and they also contributed tremendously to Nepal's art and culture. However, after almost 600 years of rule, the kings were not united among themselves and during the late 18th century, Prithvi Narayan Shah, King of Gorkha, conquered Kathmandu and united Nepal into one kingdom. During the mid-19th century Jung Bahadur Rana became Nepal's first prime minister to wield absolute power. The Ranas were overthrown in a democracy movement of the early 1950s. Today, Nepal enjoys a multiparty democratic system with a constitutional monarchy.

**Geography**  
The Kingdom of Nepal covers an area of 147,181 square kilometers, and stretches 145-241 kilometers north to south and 850 kilometers west to east. At latitudes 26 to 30 degrees north and longitudes 80 and 88 degrees east, Nepal is topographically divided into three regions: the Himalaya to the north, the hills consisting of the Mahabharat range and the Churia Hills, and the Terai to the south. Elevations are varied in the Kingdom. The highest point is Mt. Everest (8,848 m) in the north and the lowest point (70 meters above sea level) is located at Kechana Kalan of Jhapa District. Altitude increases as one travels south to north. To the north temperature are below -40 degrees Celsius and in the Terai, temperatures rise to 40 degrees Celsius in the summer. During June, July and August, the Kingdom is influenced by monsoon clouds.

**The Himalayas:** The Himalayan range makes up the northern border of the country and represents 16% of the total land area of Nepal. Peaks like Mr. Everest (8,848 m), Kanchenjunga (8,598 m), and Dhaulagiri (8,137 m) are found here and sparse vegetation is found up to 4,500 m. Some of Nepal's most beautiful animal and plant life are also found here. Although rare, the snow leopard and danphe bird are much talked about sights among visitors. The people in this region produce and sell cheese besides working as porters and guides. Many also trade with Tibet. Autonomous Region of China and travel across the border to sell their goods.

**The Hills:** This region covers 65% of

the total land area of the country. Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal is located here. Elevations range from 500 to 3,000 m above sea level. During summer the temperature reaches an average of 32 degrees Celsius. Winters are cold, temperature reaching 1 degree Celsius sometimes. Areas in the eastern hills receive more rainfall because of monsoon clouds which come from the south-east. The rivers in the west which do not receive much rainfall are dependent upon the melted snow that flow down the Himalaya. Wild animals to be found here are the spotted leopard, barking deer, and Himalayan black bear. The hilly region is also popular for different kinds of birds. Over four hundred species of birds are found here. The people in this region have gained from the growth in the tourism industry. The people here work as trekking guide and porters and also sell garments and carpets to add to their income.

**Terai:** The Terai covers 17% of the total land area of Nepal. It provides excellent farming land and average elevation of flatlands is 100 to 300 m above sea-level. Sub-tropical forest areas, marshes, and wildlife which include the Royal Bengal tiger, one-horned rhino and the gharial crocodile are found here. After the eradication of malaria in the 1960s, many people migrated to the Terai in search of farming land. Today, about 48% of the country's population occupies this region. Flat farmlands and region's flexible topography have given rise to many industries. The main industrial towns are Biratnagar, Butwal, Bhairahawa, Birjung and Janakpur.

**The People**  
**People, Culture and Languages:** In Nepal, ethnic cultural groups are diverse and many of them have their own languages and customs. However, they can be geographically categorized according to their habitats. The Sherpas who are of the Tibeto-Burman stock mainly occupy the higher hills of eastern and central Nepal. The Solu Khumbu region,

Historically, they are well known for establishing the three artistically beautiful cities of Patan, Bhaktapur and Kathmandu. The inhabitants of the hill flanks surrounding Kathmandu Valley are mostly Tamangs, who make up one of the largest Tibeto-Burman ethnic groups in the Kingdom. In the Tibetan language, Tamang means "horse soldier" which gives us an idea about their past occupation. Today, they farm and work as semi-skilled and unskilled labourers. Tamangs practice Tibetan Lamaism or the Bon religion and speak their own language.

The Magars live in the western and central hills of Nepal. They had their own kingdoms until the 18th century and were closely associated with the Hindu Indo-Aryans in the west. Much of their cultural practices have been influenced by Chhetris, and today it is difficult to make any difference in the housing, dressing and farming practices of the two.

Another ethnic group closely resembling the Magars in many aspects are the Gurungs. They also live in the western and central hills of the country although further to the east. Of Tibeto-Burman stock, the Gurungs have their own distinct language and practice shamanism.

The Khas are the Bahuns and Chhetris who formed their own kingdoms in the far-west. They are Hindus, and Nepali, which is the country's official language, was originally spoken by the Khas. Traditionally, the Bahuns were priests and are better educated than most ethnic groups. In fact, many occupy important government and educational posts in the kingdom today. The Chhetris have traditionally been known as warriors. Those living in the higher hills in the far western region lead hard lives because of lack of rain and farming is practiced in the river valleys and on the hill flanks.

The Tharus are one of the original ethnic groups to inhabit the Terai. The Majhi, Danuwar, Rajbanshi,

can be seen all over the Terai flatlands and hills of Nepal. Even in the highly urbanized Kathmandu Valley, large tracts of land outside the city areas are devoted to farming. Rice is the staple diet in Nepal and around three million tons are produced annually. Other major crops are maize, wheat, millet and barley. Besides food grains, cash crops like sugarcane, oil seeds, tobacco, jute and tea are also cultivated in large quantities. **Manufacturing:** Manufacturing is still at the developmental stage and it represents less than 10% of the GDP. Major industries are woolen carpets, garments, textiles, leather products, paper and cement. Other products made in Nepal are steel utensils, cigarettes, beverages and sugar. There are many modern large-scale factories but majority are cottage or small-scale operations. Most of Nepal's industry is based in the Kathmandu Valley and a string of small towns in the southern Terai plains.

**Trade:** Commerce has been a major occupation in Nepal since early times. Being situated at the crossroads of the ancient trans-Himalayan trade route, trading is second nature to the Nepalese people. Foreign trade is characterized mainly by import of manufactured products and export of agricultural raw materials. Nepal imports manufactured goods and petroleum products. Woolen carpets are Nepal's largest export. Other important exports are garments, pulses, hides and skins, jute and medicinal herbs.

**Tourism:** Tourism is one of the largest industries in the Kingdom. This sector had been expanding rapidly since its inception in the 1950s thanks to Nepal's natural beauty, rich cultural heritage and the diversity of sightseeing and adventure opportunities available. At one time, tourism used to be the biggest foreign currency earner for the country.

**Government**  
Nepal has a bicameral legislature. The lower house, the House of Representatives, consists of 205 members. Members to the lower house are elected every five years. The upper house, the National Assembly, is made up of 60 members who have a six-year tenure in office. One-third of the members retire every two years. Fifteen members are elected by the local government, 35 members by proportional representation, and 10 members are nominated by the King.

**Administrative Divisions:** Nepal is divided into five development regions, 14 zones, and 75 districts. Each zone consists of four to eight districts. Sixteen districts lie in the Himalayan region, 39 in the hills and 20 in the Terai. The lowest local level administrative unit is the Village Development Committee (VDC). There are 3,996 VDCs in the country.



where the world's tallest peak Mt. Everest stands, is inhabited by Sherpas. Generally they are Buddhist but some follow the Bon, the pre-Buddhist religion of Tibet. Autonomous Region of China, and other religions. The Sherpas are famed for their valor and mountaineering skills and are professionally involved in many mountain expeditions. Today, Sherpas have joined other occupations as well, like business, administration and politics.

A wide variety of ethnic groups occupy the mid-hills. The Kirats or Limbus and Rais inhabit the east. During the 7th century BC, they established a dynasty in the Kathmandu Valley and ruled it for 1,000 years. They are not originally Hindus or Buddhists but are ancestor worshippers. However, today, many embrace Hinduism. In the former days, they were warriors and skilled hunters. The Kirats speak Tibeto-Burman languages. Many people in Kathmandu valley celebrate both Hindu and Buddhist festivals. Their culture also reflects tantrism and animism. Newars are accomplished in commerce and most enterprises in the heart of the Valley are run by

Darai, Satar, and Dhimal also occupy the flat lands. The Tharus have their own unique religion and practice animism. Their culture is especially suited for the hot plains and they are actually immune to malaria. They have Mongoloid features and speak their own language. There is much migration going on in the country now and the cultural definition of the people by area is difficult. Urban population is increasing by 7% each year and most cultures have intermingled.

**Economy**  
Nepal is a developing country with an agricultural economy. In recent years, the country's efforts to expand into manufacturing industries and other technological sectors have achieved much progress. Farming is the main economic activity followed by manufacturing, trade and tourism. The chief sources of foreign currency earnings are merchandise export, services, tourism and remittances.

**Agriculture:** Eight out of the ten Nepalese are engaged in farming and it accounts for more than 40% of the GDP. Rolling fields and neat terraces

## MESSAGE

On the auspicious and happy occasion of the 57th Birthday of His Majesty King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev and the National Day of Nepal, I join the other Nepalese citizens residing in Bangladesh to express our warm greetings and felicitations to His Majesty the King for his good health, happiness and longevity. I also extend our warm greetings and best wishes to the Government and people of the People's Republic of Bangladesh at this juncture.

The Monarchy is a symbol of national unity and a source of inspiration for the social and economic development of Nepal. It strings the diverse ethnic groups, cultures and languages of the country in a coherent whole shaping Nepal into one nation. This most respected institution has made relentless efforts to promote peace, progress and prosperity in the country and to enhance image of the country in the international arena. And this makes the auspicious Birthday of His Majesty the King a happy moment and an occasion for the Nepalese people to celebrate with great joy and enthusiasm.

I am happy to note that the relations between Nepal and Bangladesh have always been friendly, close and mutually beneficial; and they have grown steadily ever since the independence of Bangladesh. Both nations share many things in common. They cherish their sovereignty and territorial integrity and believe in the principle of mutual respect and non-interference in their internal affairs. Committed to the United Nations and Non-aligned Movement, both nations have glorious history of arts, literature, culture and civilization and languages derived from a common source.

Ties between the two countries have been bolstered by their common quest for sustained peace, prosperity and democracy; and frequent official and people-to-people contacts have

nurtured these ties.

As Nepal and Bangladesh pursue the goal of strengthening democratic values and institutions, they have been also making efforts to reduce poverty and to speed up the process of development, on their own and through bilateral cooperation. Trade between the two nations has been expanding through the Kakarbhitta-Phulbari-Bangladesh route and technical cooperation is on the rise; and there is more room for building a dynamic partnership for mutual progress and prosperity. Besides, both countries are committed to regional economic integration under the SAARC and believe in multilateralism for shared benefits.

Nepal values highly its relations with Bangladesh and its cooperation. I have also received warm friendship and consistent support in this friendly country in the discharge of my duties. On behalf of the people and His Majesty's Government of Nepal, I would also like to avail this opportunity to extend our best wishes to His Excellency Professor Dr. Iajuddin Ahmed, President, and Her Excellency Begum Khaleida Zia, Prime Minister, under whose able leadership the People's Republic of Bangladesh is firmly moving on the path of peace, progress and prosperity.



Bhagirath Basnet  
Royal Nepalese Ambassador to Bangladesh

## Three good reasons to invest in Nepal

### Access to Market

A smallish country of 23.21 million people, Nepal is situated between what are potentially the two largest markets in the world: China and India. A trade treaty with India guarantees duty-free access to most Nepali manufactures. As a least developed country, Nepal is also eligible for the benefits of the Everything-But-Arms initiative of the European Union, offering its products preferential access to the European market.

### Natural Assets

Tourism is the biggest business in the world and there is hardly a country that does not seek either tourists or investment in tourism. Uniquely, Nepal offers some of the most spectacular tourist attractions in the world: 8 of the world's 10 highest mountain peaks, including the top of the world, Mount Everest; an extraordinary range of climatic conditions ranging from the sub-arctic to the tropical and a corresponding range of flora and fauna, from the snow leopard to the rhino;

a rich cultural heritage, from the birthplace of the Buddha through medieval Hindu temples to 70 spoken languages from several language families. Nepal also offers enormous potential for hydropower and a remarkable variety of agricultural products in the five climatic zones packed into a north-south breadth of 150-250 kilometers.

### Policies and People

Trends are what matter most to investors when it comes to the policy regime and here Nepal's record speaks for itself. Tariff slabs fell from over 100 in the 1980s to just 5 in the 1990s and rates went down; the foreign-exchange regime was liberalized, with the Nepali rupee becoming fully convertible on the current account; and area and percentage restrictions on FDI were reduced. Much remains to be done, but the movement is clearly in the right direction. Policies, of course, are implemented by people. Investors in Nepal value the accessibility of the bureaucracy, and the part of it that deals most specifically with investors.

# GREETINGS

TO THE BROTHERLY PEOPLE  
OF  
NEPAL

ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR  
NATIONAL DAY

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## জীবনের পূর্ণতায়... সুখের ছোঁয়ায়

আপনার স্বাস্থ্যকর জীবন - একটি লক্ষ্য ... একটি স্বপ্ন  
সেই স্বপ্ন গড়তে আমাদের ৬টি অনুপম প্রকল্প

### কনজিউমার ক্রেডিট স্কিমঃ

এই সেবামূলক প্রকল্প আপনার দৈনিক সঞ্চয় থেকে প্রয়োজনীয় গৃহস্থালী সরঞ্জাম ও বাণিজ্যিক উপকরণ যেমন টিভি, ফ্রিজ, ডিসিআর, পার্সোনাল কম্পিউটার, ফটো কপিয়ার, প্রতিষ্ঠানের জন্য মাইক্রোবাস ইত্যাদি।

### মাসিক সঞ্চয় প্রকল্পঃ

সীমিত আয়সম্পন্নদের জন্য মাসিক কিরিতিক সঞ্চয় প্রকল্প। প্রতিমাসে ৫০০ টাকা বা ১০০০ টাকা ৫ বছর বা ১০ বছর সঞ্চয় করে মেয়াদ শেষে ৩৯,১৮২ টাকা বা ২,১৫,৯৯২ টাকা বুকে দিন।

### বিশেষ সঞ্চয় প্রকল্পঃ

এই প্রকল্পের অধীনে জমাকৃত অর্থ মেয়াদী আমানত হিসাবে পাঁচ বছরের জন্য জমা রাখুন যা মেয়াদান্তে ফেরতযোগ্য। জমাকৃত অর্থের দু'ভাগ মাসিক কিরিতে প্রদান করা হবে। যেমন, ৫০,০০০ টাকা থেকে ৫০,০০,০০০ টাকার বিত্তি বুকে ৫ বছরের জন্য সঞ্চয় করে প্রতি মাসে ৫০০ টাকা থেকে ৫০,০০০ টাকা বুকা পাবেন।

### এনবিএল মাস্টারকার্ডঃ

এনবিএল মাস্টারকার্ড। যাকে বলা যায় তাত্ক্ষণিক টাকা। বাংলাদেশ ও সারা বিশ্বে ব্যবহারযোগ্য এনবিএল মাস্টারকার্ড আপনারকে সর্বত্র নগদ টাকা রাখার অপ্রয়োজনীয়তা থেকে মুক্ত রাখে। এনবিএল-এর স্থানীয় ও আন্তর্জাতিক মাস্টারকার্ড সাথে রাখুন। দেশে বিদেশে অক্ষরিত সুবিধা ভোগ করুন।

### ওয়েস্টার্ন ইউনিয়ন মানি ট্রান্সফারঃ

বিশ্বব্যাপ্ত মানি ট্রান্সফার সার্ভিস 'ওয়েস্টার্ন ইউনিয়ন'-এর মাধ্যমে বিশ্বের যে কোন স্থান থেকে কয়েক মিনিটেই - বাংলাদেশ থেকে বিদেশে - দ্রুত, সহজ ও নিশ্চিতভাবে টাকা পাঠান।

### ই-ক্যাশ এটিএমঃ

আপনার জন্যে ছুটির দিনসহ সপ্তাহের ৭ দিন, ২৪ ঘণ্টা টাকা উত্তোলন, ব্যাংকটি সপর্কিত তথ্য সংগ্রহ এবং বিল প্রদানের সহজতম সুবিধা।

বিস্তারিত জানার জন্য আমাদের যে কোন শাখায় যোগাযোগ করুন।

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