

Role of India and China in 2015 Nepal's Earthquake

A Dissertation Submitted to

Department of International Relations and Diplomacy

(DIRD)

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Tribhuvan University

In Fulfillment of the Requirement for the

Master's Degree

In

International Relations and Diplomacy

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March, 2020

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

I certify that this dissertation entitled "**Role of India and China in 2015 Nepal's Earthquake**" was prepared by Ms. Kriti Chhetri under my guidance and supervision. I hereby recommend this dissertation for final examination by the research committee Department of International Relations and Diplomacy, Tribhuvan University, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER'S IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND DIPLOMACY.

.....
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DECLARATION LETTER

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work and that it contains no materials previously published. I have not used its materials for the award of any kind and any other degree. Where other authors' sources of information have been used, they have been acknowledged.

Signature:
Kriti Chhetri
Date: 15/03/2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those who supported me in this work. First of all, with a deep sense of gratitude, I wish to express my sincere thanks to my dissertation supervisor, Assistant Professor Mr Prem Raj Khanal for his immense help in planning and executing the work. He has inspired, shaped and provided a valuable idea to complete this work. He was always available whenever I had a query and in time of need regarding the thesis problem. And it feels great to write a thesis under his supervision who kindly managed his time for reading, checking and gave his important academic suggestions.

Apart from this, I am very grateful to Professor Dr Khadga K.C. for helping me to improve my thesis writing with his valuable technical and academic feedback. I would like to thank him for keeping me encouraged to complete my dissertation. I am indebted to the Department of International Relations and Diplomacy (DIRD) for giving this opportunity to sharpen my knowledge in the geopolitical aspect of Nepal. I am also very much thankful to my other professors of DIRD, TU whose lecture classes did help me to complete this work.

I would like to share this moment of happiness with my parents and colleagues who supported me directly and indirectly. My dear friend Pratima Pokharel for her immense support and guidance she provided throughout my work.

Thank you!

Kriti Chhetri

ABSTRACT

The occurrence of natural disasters remains outside human control. Earthquakes are an unpreventable seismic activity against which humans have almost no control. A massive earthquake of 7.6 magnitudes on 25 April 2015 and a major aftershock of 6.8 magnitudes on 12 May 2015 hit central Nepal. There were 8,790 casualties and 22,300 injuries and affected one-third of Nepal's total population (28 million). The April 25, 2015 earthquake in Nepal and the subsequent aftershocks resulted in losses not only in terms of lives and physical infrastructures but also there were social, economic and political impacts.

The 2015 Nepal earthquake is one of the most devastating disasters in the modern history of Nepal. There was a wide range of response from all around the world. This overwhelming international response included immediate search and rescue personnel and support, medical teams and support, emergency relief items, as well as assets, from aircraft to deliver aid, to other equipment and machinery to assist in the relief effort. Nepal's neighbouring countries, India and China responded immediately and sent search and rescue teams and relief items right after the 2015 Earthquake. The relief efforts in Nepal showcase a competitive aspect of the two major regional powers, as China seeks to gradually increase its influence in South Asia. Both countries have made a significant contribution to Nepal through aid, and via emergency rescue and relief material since the earthquake hit hard in 2015 but they are influenced by differing interests. This thesis had analyzed how India and China utilized relief efforts to increase the sphere of influence in Nepal and the interest of them. The Chinese and Indian relief responses after the Nepal earthquakes are extrapolated to assess their strategic utility.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

CNDRC	:	Central Natural Disaster Relief Committee
DRR	:	Disaster Risk Reduction
GoI	:	Government of India
IAF	:	Indian Air Force
ICNR	:	International Conference on Nepal's Reconstruction
ICRC	:	International Committee for Red Cross
IFRC	:	International Federation of Red Cross
LoC	:	Line of Credit
MSF	:	Médecins Sans Frontières
NDRF	:	National Disaster Response Force
NDRF	:	National Disaster Response Framework
NEOC	:	National Emergency Operation Centre
NRA	:	National Reconstruction Authority
PDNA	:	Post Disaster Need Assessment
SAR	:	Search and Rescue
UNDP	:	United Nations Development Program
UNDRO	:	United Nation Disaster Relief Organization
UNOCHA	:	United Nation Office of Coordinated Humanitarian Affairs
UNOPS	:	United Nations Office for Project Services

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Nepal's geography is prone to earthquakes. After 80 years, a major earthquake occurred on 25 April 2015. Before 2015 temblor, the most recent and largest earthquake took place in 1988. "A catastrophic 7.6 magnitude earthquake as recorded by Nepal's National Seismological Centre (NSC), struck Barpak in the district of Gorkha, about 76 km northwest of Kathmandu" (Government of Nepal, National Planning Commission, 2015, p. 13). According to the National Planning Commission of Nepal, the disastrous earthquake was followed by more than 300 aftershocks. The four aftershocks were greater than 6.0 magnitude, including one measuring 6.8 which struck 17 days after the first big one with the epicentre near Mount Everest. Nepal is a hotspot for various kinds of disasters owing to its geography, topography as well as climatologically conditions and "it is one of the 20 most disaster-prone countries in the world" (The Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium, 2011, p. 17). It is due to a variety of natural factors, including its steep terrain, rugged and fragile geomorphic condition, high peaks and slopes, volatile tectonic processes, and variable climatic conditions, as well as socio-economic factors like its largely rural settlement pattern, unplanned urbanization, increasing population, poor economic condition and unplanned settlement. The historical record shows that Nepal faced various types of disasters. The entire country is prone to earthquakes due to all elevations of Nepal's mountains being exposed to avalanches and landslides. Not only earthquakes pose vulnerability to Nepal, because of the hilly areas, with their rough topography and very young geology are very prone to landslides, debris flow, and severe flooding. Similarly, the lowlands are exposed to floods in every monsoon season. In addition, avalanches, glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs), and snowstorms are common

in the high hills and most rivers in the Terai suffer from soil erosion. “Nepal ranks 11th in terms of relative vulnerability to earthquakes and 30th in case of relative flood vulnerability” (Government of Nepal, Ministry of Home Affairs, 2009, p. 5).

As Nepal and its capital city confronted a major earthquake in history dating to the 13th century. “The 1255 event that destroyed Kathmandu with surface ruptures in central and western Nepal was followed by the 1344 Kathmandu event, which ruptured the surface as far away as Kumaon, India” (Mugnier, Gajurel and Uperti, 2013, p. 35). Another deadliest earthquake in Nepal’s recorded history occurred in 1255, when a “7.7 earthquakes shook the centre of the Kathmandu valley, killing the King Abhaya Malla along with one-third of the population of Kathmandu, approximately 30,000 people” (Nasu, 1935, p. 23). The 1934 Nepal-Bihar earthquake was one of the worst earthquakes in history. “This 8.0 magnitude earthquake occurred on 15 January caused widespread damage in northern Bihar and in Nepal and the epicentre for this event was located in eastern Nepal about 9.5 km (5.9 mi) south of Mount Everest which killed 20 percent of the population and damaged 40 per cent of all the buildings in Kathmandu Valley” (Gunn, 2008, p.338). One of the major damaging earthquakes in the history of Nepal was in 1988. “This occurred near the Nepal- India border and affected much of northern Bihar where a 6.9 magnitude earthquake shook the region on August 21, killing at least 709 persons and injuring thousands and leaving cracks in 50,000 building” (Dixit, 1991, p. 10). During the 1988 earthquake, “donors were requested to inform the United Nation Disaster Relief Organization (UNDRO) directly to the contribution of bilateral and multilateral organizations to contribute and correspond their values” (Relief web, 1988).

In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, it soon became clear that the ability of victims to secure both state and non-state aid was shaped by factors that were not solely

humanitarian, but also followed differential patterns of “political and geographic access and longstanding socio-spatial exclusion” (Thapa and Ramsbotham, 2017, p. 129).

Though there was a policy and mechanism of disaster management in Nepal, however, it was very difficult to implement it. According to the Disaster management reference handbook of 2015, the Government of Nepal established the first structured disaster policy with the Natural Calamity (Disaster) Relief Act in 1982, and then expanded the legal framework with the Local Self Governance Act in 1999. Two key documents explain the disaster management system in the country. The National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management 2009 provides calculated guidance encompassing all phases of the disaster management cycle. “The Strategy describes the government’s vision to transform Nepal into a disaster-resilient nation. The National Disaster Response Framework (NDRF) details the disaster response system, international assistance process, and operational activities to organize effective preparedness and response activities” (Centre for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, 2015, p. 36).

However, there has been widely observed that Government of Nepal’s response was “quick and swift” during the initial phase of search, rescue and relief response (Government of Nepal, Ministry of Home Affairs, 2017, p. xiv). Nepal’s National Disaster Response Framework (NDRF) served as a key tool for coordination of earthquake response, facilitating decisions and instructions from the central to districts. The first meeting of the Central Natural Disaster Relief Committee (CNDRC) was held immediately after the earthquake, with the National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC) providing an initial report to the CNDRC, recommending a focus on Search and Rescue (SAR), and life saving actions. Financial resources from “the Prime Minister’s Disaster Relief Fund were immediately allocated, and the government’s cluster

mechanism, comprising 11 clusters, were instantly activated” (Government of Nepal, Ministry of Home Affairs, 2016, p. 4). On the other hand, the Nepal Army set in motion a rescue and relief operation named “Operation Sankatmochan” where Nepal Army personnel were deployed for relief and rescue operation ”(Government of Nepal, Nepal Army, 2015, p. 15). Nepal Army provided medical treatments to an individual from the most affected districts and distributed tons of relief materials. Within two months of the earthquake, the government formed the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA). And under it, the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment was ready in preparation for an international donor conference which is standard international practice for soliciting humanitarian aid. The international conference on Nepal’s reconstruction, on 25 June, ‘Toward a Resilient Nepal’, saw pledges of around USD 4.4 billion (Thapa and Ramsbotham, 2017, p. 130).

The 2015 earthquake of Nepal is one of the most devastating disasters in the modern history of Nepal. There was a wide range of response from all around the world. There was the overwhelming international response which included immediate search and rescue personnel and support, medical teams and support, emergency relief items, as well as assets, from aircraft to deliver aid, to other equipment and machinery to assist in the relief effort. “Altogether 34 countries physically responded to the disaster, 17 of which also sent their respective military teams to assist in the immediate search and rescue phase and bilateral aid in terms of relief items as well as financial aid was received from approximately 70 countries worldwide” (Cook, Shrestha & Htet, 2019, p. 2). In addition to this, the response also included the participation of many United Nations agencies and other international humanitarian organizations like the International Committee for Red Cross (ICRC), International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC), Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Oxfam, World Vision, CARE International, International Medical Corps, and

Save the Children. Smaller NGOs and private sector commitments also significantly contributed to the relief effort. But in the case of Nepal, its most prominent neighbours India and China were the first responder. India and China responded quickly by dispatching search-and-rescue teams and delivering tons of emergency supplies. News reports initially described their relief efforts as motivated by a bid for geopolitical influence as well. But in a surprising development, both India and China demonstrated cooperative leadership in the immediate response and agreed to continue working together in post-earthquake reconstruction. Their experience in Nepal offers an example of cooperation that has the potential to build trust and create a channel of positive interaction. “India was the first international team to respond with its teams arriving within the first 12 hours” (Agrawal, 2015, CNN). Whereas on 26 April, “China sent a 62-member International Search and Rescue team to Nepal to assist in the humanitarian relief effort following the earthquake which included 6 sniffer dogs and relevant rescue and medical equipment and 40 members of the rescue team are from the 38th Group Army of the People’s Liberation Army” (Panday, 2015, The Diplomat). This was followed by “teams from Nepal’s neighbours, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Bhutan and the teams from 14 countries further afield (a total of 1966 personnel) arrived in Nepal within the first 72 hours, and the remaining teams arrived within the first week” (Cook, Shrestha & Htet, 2019, p. 6).

As Nepal is a developing country and highly driven by foreign aid, the huge sum of money from all around the world was a pledge and disbursed after the 2015 earthquake especially from its neighbouring country India and China. Therefore, I choose this topic as being a student of International Relations as my area of interest is disaster diplomacy and in foreign aid. This thesis will dig out India and China’s recovery response on the 2015 earthquake as their contribution in Nepal after the 2015 earthquake was greater than

any other countries. As there is no comprehensive study was done on the response by its immediate neighbouring country India and China and their interest in providing aid to Nepal and their policy and mechanism while assisting aid to Nepal for the reconstruction. Both the countries have a deeply rooted interest in Nepal's social, political and economic policy.

1.2. Statement of the problem

The northern border of Nepal, which is mostly mountainous, is connected with China while southern (which is mostly plain), the eastern and western border of Nepal is connected with India. As it is well known, Nepal and India have been closely linked by history, geography, culture, as well as religious, commercial and economic ties. Mutual trust and friendship, along with the desire for peace and stability, are the cornerstone of the relations between the two countries. Nepal and China share deep-rooted and age-old friendly relations with each other. "The marriage of Nepalese Princess Bhrikuti Devi with the emperor of Tibet, Songtsan Gampo in the 7th-century visit of Nepali craftsman Araniko to China in the 13th century and visits to Nepal by Chinese monks and scholars at different periods in history paved a solid foundation in the development of Nepal-China relation and they officially established diplomatic relation in 1955" (Dahal, 2018, p. 53). At present, Nepal and China enjoy friendly and cordial relations by respecting each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence. The Belt and Road Initiative is the milestone point for both Nepal and China's economy and development. In 2015 Nepal's earthquake, India's 'Operation Maitri' (Friendship) from April 25 to June 4 was critical in deploying an immense amount of relief material and the Indian Air Force (IAF) immediately intervened, airlifting thousands of stranded persons and landing tons of relief material and equipment. Also "Chinese Search and Rescue (SAR) forces intervened in the first 24hr to provide aid to Nepalese population and the rescue team

arrived on Sunday morning, together with a group from the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and a second 58-members medical team arrived on Monday" (China Daily, 2015).

Thus this study has focused on the situation of Nepal during and after the 2015 earthquake. India and China actively assist the Nepal government by announcing a huge level of support bilaterally. This study has made some efforts in searching the cooperation and mechanism on Nepal in 2015 earthquake recovery and initiative taken by Nepal's close neighbour, their interest to Nepal while assisting aid as far no scholars are trying to dig up on this issue.

1.3. Research Questions

With reference to the statement of the problem of this research, the following research questions are set to be assessed:

- How was the situation of Nepal in the 2015 earthquake?
- How India and China cooperated with Nepal in the 2015 earthquake?
- What might be the major interests of India and China in delivering aid in Nepal in the 2015 earthquake?

1.4. Objectives

The specific objectives of this research were:

- To assess the situation of Nepal in the 2015 earthquake.
- To explore the cooperation of India and China with Nepal in the 2015 earthquake.
- To analyze the major interests of India and China in delivering aid in 2015 Nepal's earthquake.

1.5. Limitation of the Study

As this study has been designed for the partial fulfilment of the Master's degree in International Relations and Diplomacy, the researcher has examined the topic from economic aspects. Hence, this study focuses on the analysis of the response of India and China on Nepal's 2015 earthquake. Non-availability of previous works on the subject is

another limitation of this study. To acknowledge significance, past practices of foreign aid secondary data will be collected from the books, journals, reports and online articles.

However, the study is delimited in many ways. The individual researcher has to face so many obstacles while undertaking research work. Furthermore, the study will be mainly based on the published and unpublished primary and secondary data of information. As there is no materials regarding the analysis of the response of India and China, it will be difficult to find out reliable materials to some extent. Time and resource constraint appears to be a very prominent limitation of the subject under study.

1.6. Research and methodology

As this study pertains to the Response of China and India on Nepal's 2015 earthquake, the research is based on descriptive and analytical tools.

a. Research Design: This research adopted an explanatory research design with some quantified data.

b. Unit of Analysis: The study area is geopolitical aspects. The emerging political interest of its neighbouring donors India and China influence Nepal.

c. Nature and Sources of Data: The nature of the data is Secondary. The data have been collected from books, thesis on similar topics, journals, reports of the Government of Nepal and materials available in websites.

d. Tools and Techniques of Data Collection: Secondary data will be used in this research.

Content analysis of documents and texts like articles, journals, reports, books, online videos and the collected data will be analyzed through the theoretical aspect.

1.7. Organization of Thesis

The first chapter gives an introduction and historical background of the topic along with the detailed introduction. The second chapter reviews the related literature that consists

of reviewing the various aspects of aids primarily by India and China. The third chapter portrays the concept of foreign aid and theoretical definitions, forms and channels of foreign aid. The fourth chapter includes physical, social, economic and political impacts of the 2015 Earthquake in Nepal. The fifth chapter analyzes the donors interest i.e. India and China foreign aid to Nepal in the 2015 earthquake and lessons learnt by Nepal. At last, the fifth chapter, a conclusion and summary, is a qualitative analysis of 2015 Nepal's Earthquake response by India and China.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

“Foreign aid is not a recent phenomenon” (Hoadley, 1980, p. 122). Foreign aid, however, in its 'modern' guise, has its origins in the Marshall Plan, officially known as the European Recovery Program, the Marshall Plan dispensed over \$13 billion between 1948 and 1952 to Western European countries (Wood, 1986, p. 29). The trend towards multilateralism, however, was to lose pace in the 1980s. As small donors expanded their total aid programs and that's effective bilateral programs became possible. Donors, understandably, tend to prefer bilateral programs because they could be used to improve political and commercial relations with recipient nations. Indeed, until the mid-1970s, it was widely agreed that commercial activities should be distinguished from aid.

"The economic recession of the 1980s, however, led to a retreat from the liberal attitudes that existed in the early 1970s. The practice of 'tying' of aid to suppliers in donor countries, which raised the costs of goods and materials, thus reducing the value of aid increased. Aid, by the 1980s, had, therefore, come to be acknowledged as a legitimate tool for serving donor interests, while at the same time fulfilling humanitarian objectives” (Cosgriff, 2001, p. 38). In today's international arena we can find different donor-driven interests while giving foreign aid to the donor-recipient state in times of disaster or so forth. “Foreign aid during and after natural disasters, too, has a geostrategic dimension and disasters produce an opportunity for change in relationships. Such relationships could be a strengthening of bilateral ties through non-coercive measures such as rescue missions in the immediate aftermath of natural disasters. States of emergency can be utilized by powerful actors to advance their own interests. Natural disasters do warrant the designation of state of emergency, given the unprecedented pressure on governmental and societal structures” (Comfort, 2000, p. 291). In the context

of providing foreign aid, donors usually put some agenda because this is a world of "anarchy" all nation-states are motivated by national interests, or, at best (Morganthau, 1978, p. 9). "There are three donor motives for providing foreign aid: aid in exchange for support for donor's interests, increased trade with the donor by the recipient state, and the betterment of the standard of living of the recipient state's populace" (Dudley and Montmarquette 1976, p. 54).

"Aid is, in fact, primarily motivated by political and strategic considerations. Example: US aid to the Middle East, which disregards the region's poverty levels or politico-economic regimes in favour of its geostrategic interests. Despite the existence of states having robust policy mechanisms for economic growth, they could likely be sidelined because of the donor states not finding much strategic use for them" (Alesina and Dollar 2000, p. 33). We can view foreign aid and its role in Nepal's economic, political and social change inside Nepal before and after the massive earthquake. Foreign aid becomes one of the significant factors to Recovery when the unexpected quake hits the land of Nepal, as "foreign aid has contributed to the national financial necessities over the years. Donors undertake inadequate homework in the design of projects, often duplicating activities and inappropriately prioritizing goals and objectives" (Pyakurel, Adhikari, and Dhakal, 2008, p. 61).

To recover in all aspects after the huge loss in the earthquake Nepal had to face a wide range of challenges. Foreign aid becomes one of the assets to our government slogan "we will rise again"(Rana, 2015, p. 1). Though many countries including our neighbours immediately landed in Nepal. Social institution heritage sites, even the household are largely damaged and Nepal was not able to cope with all these problems alone. The aftermath of an earthquake, Nepal government faces challenges such as "inaccessibility, inadequate financial and human resources, logistical issues, harsh social environment"

(Davidson, Johnson, Lizarralde, Dikmen and Sliwinski, 2007, p. 112). With such varieties of challenges, Nepal has no option than to call for international assistance but while the government invites them it fails to make proper mechanisms. "The government failed to make a preliminary assessment of its existing institutional capabilities in terms of strengths and weaknesses to deliver prompt emergency management. As a result of its hasty appeal, the government was overwhelmed by a large number of incoming international military and non-military humanitarian teams and aid items, which created a burden in terms of coordinating their support and distribution" (Shrestha and Pathranarakul, 2018, p. 17). For example, Tribhuvan International Airport was overwhelmed with relief materials, many of which were unnecessary and unhelpful items such as canned food (not suitable for the Nepalese culture) as well as unnecessary medicine and clothing items" (Shrestha and Pathranarakul, 2018, p. 17).

To cope with post-earthquake recovery two months after the disaster, a one-day conference called International Conference on Nepal's Reconstruction (ICNR)' was held on 25 December 2015. The first international donor conference ever held in the country assembled more than 300 delegates which include 56 nations, development partners and the donor community. "They all together pledged \$4.4 billion in aid during the International Conference. This has come as a huge relief to the reconstruction and recovery bid and brought cheers to the government" (Chhetri, 2018, p. 9).

For the Nepal government, the huge tasks have emerged for the reconstruction, development of infrastructure and revival of the local economy. For that our immediate neighbour India came with large assistance on which the Government of India announced a new economic package of US\$ 1 billion during the International Conference on Nepal's Reconstruction held on 25 June 2015 to help support the Government of Nepal in its reconstruction efforts. The Government of India's (GoI) economic package

comprised of 25% grant and 75% Line of Credit which was aimed to support reconstructions works in the areas of Housing, Road and Transports, Health, Education, Cultural Heritage site Power and Disaster Risk Management” (Website of Embassy of India, Reconstruction Wing). “To expedite the post-earthquake reconstruction process, Government of India, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) have entered into an agreement, under which GoI will provide a US\$ 16.2 million grant to the two UN agencies to support the safer reconstruction of 50,000 houses in two districts: Gorkha (26,912 houses) and Nuwakot (23,098 houses)” (UNDP, 2018, p. 2).

“The Ministry of External Affairs of India has allocated the grant to Nepal which has increased by 40% for the fiscal year 2019/20. According to India's National Budget, Nepal will receive Indian rupees 1050 crore for this fiscal year. In the last fiscal year, the Indian government had allocated Indian rupees 750 crores to Nepal. The aid to Nepal is going to fall from the revised estimates of current Fiscal Year 2018/19 by nearly 500 million Indian rupees. However, the allocated budget will be higher than the initial estimates of the same fiscal year. The revised estimate stands at INR 7.5 billion, while the initial budget estimate was 6.5 billion. The Indian aid to Nepal had more than doubled to INR 6.5 billion in Fiscal Year 2018/19 from the previous fiscal year's 3.77 billion” (My Republica, 2019).

Not only the India neighbours like China, but Bhutan and Bangladesh also came up with immediate relief, requiring personnel and equipment. Almost all the countries in the world came to assist Nepal, financially and otherwise, at this time of need. In regard to China, the Chinese government also come to play a prominent role in the reconstruction like India “Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi pledged to extend Rs. 76 billion or 4.7 billion RMB (US \$760 million) both grant and loan, also offered a concessional loan

from Silk Road Fund from China to Nepal's reconstruction bid. Likewise, India announced the largest amount in aid of NRs 100 billion (US \$ 1 billion) for Nepal's post-earthquake reconstruction (Shrestha, 2015, The Kathmandu Post)".

In this context of the earthquake reconstruction, Nepal was receiving assistance from an extraordinarily large number of countries and organizations. By and large all are driven with social-political motifs while providing assistance to other nations. Historically in Nepal, "donor interest in Nepal in those initial years was driven principally by the fact that the country occupied a strategic position as a frontline state against mainland China. The main aim of China seems to be to lose the hold of Nepal from India and gain ascendancy in the Himalaya rather than attempt to reshape the Nepalese economy or society" (Mihaly, 2002, p. 28).

Ever since Nepal started receiving foreign aid, international communities have been increasingly involved in its development process. "The assistance received from them has been on the rise to a level where at one point disbursements constituted around 80 per cent of the development budget" (Sharma, 2002, p. 50). A developing nation like Nepal foreign aid is the main catalyst to the development process and a developing nation also hopes to develop the nation by taking foreign aid as the main resource of budget. Such aid reliance has certainly had some serious domestic political implications. As donor countries carry the political motif on their assistance. As, "In the last decade of the Panchayat period, there was a tendency in the domestic political debate to see a relationship between the dominant powers in the country and foreign assistance. While the government projects were by and largely unable to reduce poverty, development through foreign aid essentially became a metaphor for the maintenance and strengthening of the traditional power structure. The political picture has gone through several changes since then; however, foreign aid continues to constitute a very large share of the

development budget” (Sharma, Upreti and Pyakurel, 2012, p. 11). Chinese and Indian aid practice to Nepal particularly seems to be guided by geostrategic interest as Nepal holds its important position geographically in the South Asian region. Both neighbours are tussling with each other on their interest in the name of foreign aid while Nepal only wants assistance in its development process. So, “In comparison with Chinese aid to Nepal, the overall impact of Indian aid on Nepal’s national life is not favourable despite the largest volume of aid. It is owing to mainly the underlying motives of aid which are mostly incompatible with the goals of Nepal” (Malla, 2012, p. 89).

India's interest in Nepal while providing foreign aid mostly guided by its regional interest while India wants to be the head of South Asia region. “Connectivity has long been a buzzword in India's regional diplomacy. In the case of India's frontier with Nepal, serious pursuit of connectivity should be simply transformative. Improving connectivity, modernizing infrastructure preserving cultural heritage and promoting are central to Modi’s economic program at home” (Mohan, 2015, p. 56). India strategically becomes more influential to its neighbour when “Modi appears to have recognized that India's ability to deal with great powers like the United States and China will significantly improve only if and when Delhi can reconstitute the geopolitical unity of the sub-continent” (Mohan, 2015, p. 45). "The motives behind the Indian aid is that only in the last decade has India begun to see it as an instrument to gain political and economic influence” (Krageuland, 2011, p. 594). This can be the one reason India comes to be very active in the time of disaster or after earthquake reconstruction. In another view, as China also comes to play a prominent role as a good neighbour India becomes more active because in regional and global bilateral political agenda in between we can view their policies are countering with each other. We can analyze India and China countering each other via Nehru's speech in the 1950s "our interest in the internal conditions of Nepal has

become still more acute and personal because of the development across our borders, to be Frank especially in China and Tibet” (Nehru, 1950, p. 46). Furthermore, India had fundamentally the same aim in Nepal as the United States: “the exclusion of Chinese influence” (Mihaly, 1965, p. 87). So India with global power the United States carries the same strategy while providing foreign aid to the developing assistance.

While "China considers developments in Nepal too important from its own political-economic, diplomatic and security perspectives" (Shimkhada, 2009, p. 4). "Modern world is characterized by interdependence nature. Here the states are the major units of the international system who always take part in interaction with the aim to protect their interest” (Baral, 2018, p. 25). Thus India and China both as a rising global actor in international relations have particularly their own interest while giving aid for the development or in reconstruction in Nepal.

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Research Methodology

Primarily this proposed researched attempt would be qualitative research. Therefore I will be using mostly secondary and primary data of published newspaper articles, conference reports, and books with different quotations, speech, related persons television interviews and so on. Apart from that, I will use the different aired/available printed interviews to confirm the validity of the research study. I have especially used definitions, concepts and electronic and internet media sources in this research.

3.2. Theoretical Analysis

Concept of foreign aid: Throughout its history, foreign aid has been meant to provide worldwide development assistance that is assumed to lie at the heart of moral imperatives – “donors’ moral obligation to better the living condition of the poor in the developing world. Against this rule, however, the aid regime and its transformations cannot be seen in isolation of issues that fall under the headline of politics - power, security, ideology, foreign policy, national interest, and the like” (Nigatu, 2015, p. 2). Hence, foreign aid has become a magnificent tool to polish any state's national interest in foreign countries. Thus, “who uses aid, and for what?” is the crucial political question in foreign aid (White, 1974, p. 10).

Foreign aid theories that are used by different aid practitioners to explain issues within the realm of assistance. Currently, there is a higher learning among scholars to construct theories of foreign aid in terms of some basic paradigms concerned with relations among states. Accordingly, in this chapter, study attempts to understand foreign aid in light of international relations (IR) theories.

Theories on Foreign Aid	
Realist	<p>Driven by donor's national interest, political and economic, security as a motivation for external assistance.</p> <p>Classical realist: Donors design and implement aid programs thereby initially considering the political, military and strategic importance of the recipient country.</p> <p>Neo-realist: Consider the economic dimension of national security with the recipient country's economic potential providing momentum for aid priorities.</p>
Liberalist idealist	<p>Non-material, moral and humanitarian motivations and desires such as ethical or charitable obligations. Foreign aid as an instrument to cooperate in addressing the problems of other countries for interdependence and globalization. International organizations carry such motivations foreign aid is required to establish peace and prosperity and responsibility to all.</p>
Constructivist	<p>Moral imperatives are in front while aid programs of donor countries and donor agencies are designed.</p>
Marxism	<p>The main motif of foreign aid is to preserve or widen economic disparities between wealthy donor states and poor countries.</p>

Table 1: Theories on Foreign Aid

In international relations, we can view three major lenses largely attempting to comprehend what are the actual donor motivations towards aid recipient countries. The foremost is the Realist lens. Realistic theorists assume that any nation who provides foreign aid and their policies of foreign aid are driven primarily by strategic national interests, with national security, preservation instinct and defensive objective. And in this 21st century, in international politics apparently, humanitarian needs and economic development are seen as secondary objectives of foreign aid. There are two Realist schools. Classical Realists see that aid priorities are motivated by the politico-military strategic importance of recipient states, in the form of military alliances. Neorealists, on the other hand, acknowledge the commercial dimension of national security with the

economic potential of the recipient state providing the impetus for aid priorities. Marxist lens views the foreign aid motives of donor countries is capitalist exploitation in the form of aid and enhances the power of elites in both the industrialized and developed nations. This brings more gaps between “haves and have not”. So aid for Marxist theorists is a tool for more widening the existing economic disparities between wealthy states and Third World countries. The second lens of International Relations theory relating to aid is the Idealistic theory. Idealist theorists are optimistic as they see aid as a positive tool particularly it can develop the economic and development condition of the giver as well as the receiver of foreign aid. It hopes it will end Third World poverty. So idealist aid is a tool to cooperation between donor and recipient countries.

In this observation "realist and Marxist theories appear to be donor oriented and satisfy their motives while the idealist and constructivist thinking seem to be recipient oriented and intended to serve their aspirations. In this regard, realist and Marxist theories appear to be much more influential in explaining the aid regime in the today's world because of donor with their foreign policy objectives conditioning their behaviours and actions across the world to support developing countries in an effort to end the chaos, civil war, political instability, drought -famine, poverty ethnic strife and the like in the latter. However, donors' ultimate goal is to be basically interested in the stability of aid recipient countries given the basic assumptions that hunger breeds discontent and discontent breeds instability” (Olaniyan, 1996, p. 56).

While it can be argued that each body of theory has its own strengths, in this thesis, it should not be guided by any of them in particular. This is an assessment of the motifs and aid programmes of India and China towards Nepal. Indeed, it seems more appropriate that as India and China is a close neighbour of Nepal and both have social, political, economic, historical, trade, and the commercial linkage between them since centuries.

This shows they have some motive behind giving aid. While providing aid they are guided by that aforementioned linkage. In this thesis, as both the countries are rising as a powerful state in the region and in the global arena, Nepal being an immediate neighbour will look how they are motivating themselves in Nepal while providing foreign aid in post-earthquake recovery.

3.2.1. The Politics of Foreign Aid

On the other hand, foreign aid as “a political force abroad and a political issue at home, irrespective of its successes and failures” for this reason, “its purposes and its achievements, its origins and its operations, its giving and its receiving, all involve conflicts of ideology and power”. This is particularly important in the realist account, which states that sovereign states behave in a way pursuing their national interests in an international system, which is full of anarchy and danger”(Montgomery, 1962, p. 35). In fact, when official foreign aid came into being in the late 1940s, it was necessitated mainly by two political factors: “U.S. fear of communist expansionism and European imperial politics” (Wall, 1973, p.113).

“India’s effort has so far been directed towards making Nepal’s economy complementary and supplementary to its own national economy through its aid and trade with Nepal” (Malla, 2012, p. 42). “China had attempted to secure an accommodating position in Nepal’s politics through its aid because the contemporary political situation in Nepal was not favourable to it” (Malla, 2012, p. 123).

3.2.2. Forms of Foreign Aid

The American Heritage Dictionary defines- “Foreign aid as economic or military assistance offered by one nation to another”. Foreign aid is simply a resource given by

developed countries and international organizations to support the economic, sociological and political development of developing countries. It is the transfer of resources from developed countries for the purpose of encouraging economic growth in developing countries with the promotion of economic development. However, there is no agreed-upon definition of foreign aid. "The foreign aid should have certain features such as it should be with aim of economic development, the welfare of the recipient country and should have a grant element, low-interest rate and supportive for long term capital requirement" (Pandey, 2018, p. 71). In today's world of political economy as foreign aid has different forms of assistance it becomes the most dominant factor for the growth of any countries economy "Foreign aid enables the developing economy to achieve the objective of technological up-gradation and innovations and helps to meet the gap between investment needed and saving. Besides, it overcomes not only capital deficiency and technological backwardness but also brings skilled personnel, organizational experience, market information advanced production techniques, innovations etc" (Lekhi, 2005, p. 23).

Foreign aid comes with different packages. Donor countries have so many types of foreign aid as they have a different level of interest in providing aid. Foreign aid has many forms; from capital transfers or technical assistance, training and so on. "There are many reasons why governments give aid. Some aid is given for political reasons such as preserving peace. Others are given for specific development purposes whether increasing the capacity of certain industries, reducing poverty, or improving education or health care. Some are given to improve terms of trade and some can be given for humanitarian relief efforts in certain cases of emergency such as famine and natural disasters. While the political side of aid in many cases may be hard to investigate, the effect of aid in fulfilling its declared objective can be searched" (Rady, 2012, p. 124).

Foreign aid as a voluntary transfer of public resources from a government to another government, NGO, or an international organization with at least a 25% grant element with the objective of improving the human conditions in the country receiving the aid. In his study, “foreign aid was used for four main purposes: diplomatic, developmental, humanitarian relief and commercial. In addition, especially when it comes from a powerful government or international organization, foreign aid is a “potent political symbol and signal” (Lancaster, 2006, p. 19). Foreign aid is among the “real innovations which the modern age has introduced into the practice of foreign policy” (Morgenthau, 1962, p. 301).

3.2.3. Channels of Foreign Aid

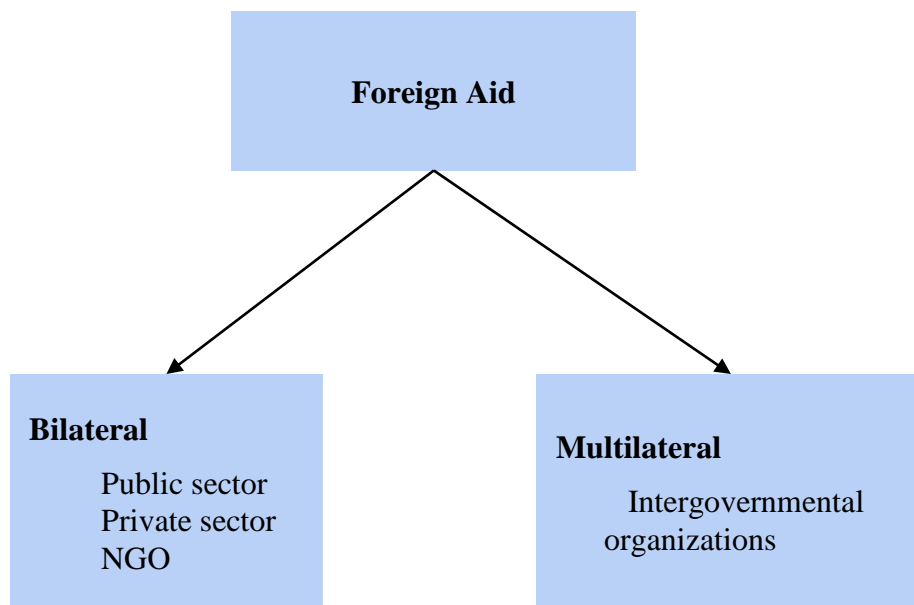


Figure 1 : Channels of foreign aid

Foreign aid flows with different mediums as it is practised widely and aprioristically by any nations. The channels of Foreign aid are through Bilateral or Multilateral aids. “The OECD defines bilateral transactions as those undertaken by a donor country directly with a developing country. It also includes transactions with NGOs active in the development

and other, internal development-related transactions like debt relief, administrative costs and spending on development awareness. A multilateral contribution, in contrast, can be delivered only by an international institution conducting all or part of its activities in favour of development. Moreover, the flow itself must lose its identity and become an integral part of the recipient institution's assets such that donors cannot track and pre-define its uses" (Gulrajani, 2016, p. 7).

Observing the wave of foreign aid practice shows the donor countries channelled by which medium can explain the modus operandi of the donor state. When bilaterally providing foreign aid it can reserve their policies strongly in recipient countries. And while foreign aid is channelled through the multilateral channel it loses the national interest but influences the role of such organization and cooperation between the states. "Bilateral channels are thought to be easily captured by vested interests and this desire for political gain is often claimed as characteristic of their assistance" (Verdier, 2008, p. 456). In regard to multilateral aid this medium of providing aid shows the greater values of cooperation humanity and peaceful co-existence and it also decrees the unnecessary influence that donor countries try to preserve in the recipient country. "Multilateral aid is generally seen as a less political form of aid than bilateral aid, encouraging international cooperation rather than strategic and commercial interests of respective donor countries. It pools resources enabling the implementation of large-scale programs that are beyond the capacity of individual donor countries through bilateral aid. Likewise, multilateral aid can help coordinate donors to address issues at regional and global levels and harmonize their efforts, thereby reducing donor burden in recipient countries" (Aid Watch, 2008).

So in this context bilateral and multilateral aid is part of the larger ideology because of their own kind of motifs in providing aid. Most donor states are trying to say the main objective of aid is to promote economic development and welfare of developing

countries while distributing aid. There have been many different statistical studies with widely differing results regarding the correlation between aid and economic growth, and therefore, the debate continues. Bilateral aid is more transparent to the voters because they can see that this sum of money went to this country, whereas a lump of money going to an international organization gives the appearance of wasted funds. However, there is an argument for the “selfishness of bilateral aid, seeking to benefit the donor countries over the recipients and maintaining economic colonial ties” (Kilmister, 2016, *Development in Action*).

Among the choices that donors must make is whether to allocate via bilateral versus multilateral channels. Bilateral aid is distributed directly from donor countries to recipient countries. Bilateral channels are more politicized than multilateral channels “but note that multilateral aid flows are also politicized”, that aid recipients prefer “multilateral to bilateral channels”, and that aid dispersed via multilateral channels is often less fragmented than via bilateral channels (Guljarni, 2016, p. 10).

Bilateral aid is hypothesized to increase funding flows to development outcomes by appealing to donors’ “strategic interests” and including donor countries’ desire for more direct accountability (Alesina and Dollar, 2000, p. 63). For some donors, notably, the Nordic countries, developmental and humanitarian motives have figured prominently in the allocation of aid. States are able to take advantage of their direct control of the funds they bestow by requiring, requesting or expecting certain gains (in various forms) in return. For example, “Japan concentrates its aid in the Asian region; Britain and France give much of their aid to former colonies; political and cultural relations are evident in OPEC’s aid allocations; and strategic motives dominate the bilateral aid programs of the United States” (Ram 2003, p. 100).

Bilateral aid has many advantages. “Countries often are peculiarly well placed to assist others with which they have long-standing relationships. They have specific technical skills often developed in, or because of association with, the countries concerned. They oftentimes, as is the case with imperialist/colony relationships or other historical ties, have linguistic and personal affinities which may facilitate the ability to render appropriate technical assistance. Their institutional structures are often derived one from the other, as well” (Bonne, 1996, p. 300). In all these cases, national interest shapes the style of aid in the hopes that it may allow them to strengthen ties with recipients for economic, political, strategic or cultural reasons.

“Political and strategic motivations such as security goals, access to military bases and strategic natural resources, diplomatic ties and prestige have been prominent features of aid policy for the governments of states” (Lundborg, 1998, p. 127). They link aid to ‘exchange conditions’, or “quid pro quos”, either expressly or implicitly where studies have proven the link between US and Soviet foreign aid and international political support, especially, during the Cold War period, where aid given by the United States and the Soviet Union was meant to solidify their respective alliances and allow them access to the territory from which to involve themselves in proxy wars and political currency in order to contain the enemy (Lundborg, 1998, p. 130).

CHAPTER 4

2015 EARTHQUAKE IMPACT IN NEPAL

The April 25, 2015 earthquake in Nepal and the subsequent aftershocks resulted in losses not only in terms of lives and physical infrastructures but also there were social, economic and political impacts. In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, it soon became clear that the ability of victims to secure both state and non-state aid was shaped by factors that were not solely humanitarian, but also followed differential patterns of “political and geographic access and longstanding socio-spatial exclusion” (Thapa and Ramsbotham, 2017, p. 129).

4.1. Physical Impact

The extensive physical damage was recorded throughout Nepal. Nepal lost culturally, historically significant long preserved heritage in the capital city of Kathmandu. Outside the capital valley the destruction was widespread covering residential and government buildings, heritage sites, schools and health posts, rural roads, bridges, water supply systems, agricultural land, trekking routes, hydropower plants and sports facilities. Hundreds of historical and cultural monuments at least a century old were either destroyed or extensively damaged. Many rural areas in the central and western regions were devastated and further isolated due to damage and obstruction of roads and trails. Although much of the damage was the direct result of shaking, a considerable portion resulted from the impact of geohazards, especially landslides and debris flows. The majority of earthquake-induced landslides affected only forest land and/or small amounts of cultivated land but did not cause large loss of property, infrastructure, or life. However, a minority of landslides caused extensive damage, the most extreme of which were those in Langtang.

According to the National Planning Commission of Nepal, there were over 8,790 casualties and 22,300 injuries and it is estimated that the lives of eight million people, almost one-third of the population of Nepal, have been impacted by these earthquakes. “Almost 288,793 buildings damaged and 254,114 building partially damaged” (Centre for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, 2015, p. 31). The physical impacts of the disaster were immense in the most affected areas. Thirty-one of the country’s 75 districts have been affected, out of which 14 were declared “crisis-hit” for the purpose of prioritizing rescue and relief operations; another 17 neighbouring districts are partially affected (Government of Nepal, National Planning Commission, 2015, p. 13).

The impact of the earthquake was catastrophic. Less than 1% of government buildings were fully damaged while more 99% of private houses were fully damaged (Government of Nepal, Ministry of Home Affairs, 2015. p.4). Fully damaged houses were more than partially damaged houses. The partially damaged houses were 1.3% and 98.7% government buildings and private houses respectively. With regards to the public buildings, over 1,000 health facilities were destroyed and about 7,000 schools were destroyed (Government of Nepal, National Planning Commission, 2015, p.11).

4.2. Economic Impact

The earthquake has an adverse effect on the already fragile economy of Nepal. Just before the earthquake, in March, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) had predicted 4.6% growth for the fiscal year 2015. Due to the quake, “the projection of ADB 2015 was 4.2% growth” (Sapkota, 2015, Asian Development Blog). The earthquake and its effect hit hard in Nepal. In the nation overall this disaster created a crisis situation in every aspect. Country’s economic condition has become worse. As the major backbone

of the country's economy, the tourism industry is affected in large. Tourism is a major economic activity in Nepal with its contribution estimated to be NRs. 147.2 billion (US \$ 69 billion) in 2012 or 9.4 percent of GDP (Jones, 2011, p. 16). As Nepal a heaven destination for the adventure seeker and culture lover, tourists have faced disastrous earthquakes which created chaos and crisis situations. The tourism industry was highly affected by the earthquakes as temples and trekking routes were damaged. "The earthquake, and the accompanying aftershocks, caused severe damage to four out of the seven UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the nation" (Ulak, 2015, p. 73). According to the 2015 statistics of the Ministry of Tourism, "altogether 397 km trekking routes have been fully and partially damaged" (Government of Nepal National Planning Commission, 2015, p. 29). There has been a sharp decline in the number of internal and foreign tourists as a consequence of damages in infrastructure, the hotel and restaurant sector. The devastating earthquake in Nepal has dragged itself towards the downfall in its tourism industry as well as in the economy of the country.

The other part of Nepal's major economy, agriculture and forestry were greatly affected. In this sector due to landslides that occurred after the earthquake, people were internally displaced from their homes and became the reason this field impacted so high. Ultimately this leads to worsening the economic condition to Nepal. According to the report of 2015 Post-Disaster Need Assessment, "the earthquakes pushed up an additional 2.5-3.5% Nepalese into poverty in Fiscal year 2015/2016 which increased at least 700,000 people under the poverty line" (Government of Nepal National Planning Commission, 2015, p. 29).

4.3. Social Impact

Despite their common representation as a 'national tragedy', the earthquakes themselves and the subsequent earthquake politics have in fact been unevenly distributed across

Nepal and across socioeconomic and ethnic groups. There was an intense social impact after the disastrous earthquake. Historical patterns of structural inequality left some groups far more vulnerable than others. The earthquake exacerbated the social inequalities in the Nepalese society. Lower caste groups were more affected by the earthquake than upper caste communities. Exclusion and discriminatory practices keep the lower caste people out accessing credit. Thus, minority groups were more vulnerable than their counterparts.

During natural disasters, materials and practical provision of relief are imperative. In the aftermath of a disaster, there is an increase of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and sexual assaults (UN Women-OCHA, 2015). Natural disasters in resource-poor countries have differential effects on a socially disadvantaged group such as women. Challenges to women's health in post-disaster settings arise from interrelated biological and social determinants: reproductive health needs to be combined with an intensification of existing social inequities along the "inter-sectional" lines of gender, wealth, caste, ethnicity, and education. More women died than men in all the affected districts except for Kathmandu (Crenshaw, 1989, p.140). Women and pre-school age children were the main casualties in the earthquake because women stayed at home caring for children and doing household activities. Houses were vulnerable and the physical disadvantage of women and children made them difficult to escape out from home (UN Women, 2015). The United Nation Office of Coordinated Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) stated that "people living below the poverty line were the worst affected and most vulnerable as their houses which were made of mud and clay were destroyed after the earthquake" (UNOCHA, 2015, p. 10). Poor living conditions, disruptions in economic activities and loss of income have adversely affected women and children. As a result, some have resorted to child labour, disruptions in policy, the justice system and loss of family

protection and exposing vulnerable groups at greater risk of violence, abuse and exploitation. In addition, “the survivors were preyed upon by human traffickers involved in the supply of girls and women to the brothels of South Asia” (Shakya, 2016, p. 77). These traffickers took advantage of the chaos that resulted from the aftermath of the earthquake. The most affected were women from poor communities who lost their homes.

4.4. Political Impact

As mentioned by Randal S. Olson “natural disasters can trigger swift political changes, especially in low-income, conflict-affected and foreign aid-dependent countries” (Olson, 2000, p. 87). Taking this into an account, the major earthquake not only impacted physically, economically and socially, it equally shook the politics of Nepal as well. Nepal is a developing country which is mostly dependent on foreign aid and it has been facing fluid political conditions for a long time. Nepal remained stuck in a prolonged period of uncertain political transition, defined by the failure to draft a constitution, a vacuum in local governance, and a recurrent pattern of political brinkmanship and power-brokering that kept Nepal continually on the edge of a political height. The government in Kathmandu was preoccupied with its own political theatre and was thoroughly unprepared for any kind of disaster, despite the inevitability of a major and seemingly overdue earthquake in the Central Himalaya.

“An early notable impact at the political level was the 16-point agreement of 8 June 2015 among four major political parties to expedite the long-drawn process of drafting a new constitution” (Gautam, 2016, p. 6). Nepal’s political leaders, who have been deadlocked in negotiations over a new constitution for the past six years, were quite literally shaken up by the earthquake. Drafting a new constitution is the last remaining element in the peace process that ended the Maoist conflict in 2006. The constitution was

formally adopted on September 20, 2015, despite the protests. “Many political leaders remarked that along with this agreement, the constitutional deadlock ended and they would focus on rebuilding” (Khanal, 2015, p. 2). Then, they became able to deliver the preliminary draft of the new constitution. The massive earthquake of April 25, 2015, played the major role behind preparing the first draft of the statute. The government was criticized heavily for chaotic earthquake relief, it tried to restore its image by putting constitution-writing on the “fast track” (Dixit, 2015, *The Diplomat*). But that effort has led to an eruption of violence, in which 40 people have been killed, over future federal demarcations, mainly along the plains bordering India.

However, Nepal faced many hurdles in disaster management during and aftermath of the 2015 earthquake. The National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) was finally established eight months after the disaster. “The NRA had been sketched out in the wake of the donor conference in June 2015, and officially constituted under a special ordinance on 22 June. But the government failed to get it approved by the Legislature-Parliament within the required timeframe of 60 days, and it was hence automatically dissolved” (Lord and Moktan, 2017, p. 3). This was primarily because of political tussles over which party would control the NRA through its appointed chief executive officer (CEO). As the UML strategically filibustered, the Legislature-Parliament was in recess for the second half of August and Speaker Subash Chandra Nembang (of the UML) set a date for the re-adjournment of the House too late for ratifying the ordinance. According to the Disaster management reference handbook of 2015, the Government of Nepal established the first structured disaster policy with the Natural Calamity (Disaster) Relief Act in 1982, and then expanded the legal framework with the Local Self Governance Act in 1999. Two key documents explain the disaster management system in the country. The National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management 2009 provides calculated guidance encompassing

all phases of the disaster management cycle. “The Strategy describes the government’s vision to transform Nepal into a disaster-resilient nation. The National Disaster Response Framework (NDRF) details the disaster response system, international assistance process, and operational activities to organize effective preparedness and response activities” (Centre for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, 2015, p. 36). It shows that, though there were policies and mechanisms of the disaster management in Nepal, however, it was very difficult to implement it.

Different government institutions responded in different ways. Some disaster response mechanisms were activated and some were not. Accounts of the first few days following the earthquake demonstrate both a lack of official capacity and an atmosphere of confusion among the political class. Not known for its efficiency on the best of days, Nepal’s government was unable to mount a quick, efficient and centralized rescue, relief and recovery operation. The massive earthquakes have damaged a lot of life and property in Nepal. All the sectors have been affected. It also influenced domestic politics of Nepal creating a pressure on the political leaders to complete their ongoing task of drafting the constitution and concentrating their attention on rebuilding the quake-ravaged country. Taking into account Nepal’s vulnerability to earthquakes, they were supposed to make plans and policies to protect and minimize the damages during the earthquake in future. The earthquake also taught a lesson to them that political stability is quite essential to fight successfully during times of disasters.

CHAPTER 5

AID MOTIF OF INDIA AND CHINA FOR 2015 POST-EARTHQUAKE

RECOVERY IN NEPAL

There has been a massive amount of aid that has entered Nepal during the earthquake. According to Development Cooperation Report, 2017/2018 published by the Ministry of Finance, China has pledged \$766.927 million and disbursed \$20.31 millions and similarly, India has pledged \$1400 million and disbursed \$220 million and \$825.63 million has been disbursed which was made by Japan, republic of Korea, IMF, USA World Bank and ADB. (Development Cooperation Report, 2017/2018, p.14)

5.1. India's Response to Nepal in 2015 earthquake

Operation Maitri was a rescue and relief operation in Nepal by the government of India and Indian armed forces in the aftermath of the April 2015 Nepal earthquake. As Nepal's immediate neighbour, India was the first responder to the crisis, by providing relief "within six to seven hours of the earthquake", Prime Minister Narendra Modi directed immediate dispatch of relief and rescue teams, including medical team, to Nepal (Pandey & Singh, 2017, p. 294). India responded within minutes by gathering resources to help Nepal. Operation Maitri was launched under which numerous aircraft and helicopters of the Indian Air Force (IAF). It came into action taking "relief material to Nepal and the Government of India swiftly dispatched National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams and special aircraft with rescue and relief materials to Nepal" (Jain, 2018, p.47). India helped in restoring 3 power substations in Kathmandu valley. "The total Indian relief assistance to Nepal amounted to over US\$ 67 million" (Website portal of Government of India, 2018). Likewise, the Government of India announced a new economic package of US\$ 1 billion during the International Conference on Nepal's Reconstruction held on 25 June, 2015 to help support the Government of Nepal in its

reconstruction efforts. “The Government of India’s (GoI) economic package comprises 25% grant and 75% Line of Credit (LoC) which was signed on September 16, 2016” (Website of Embassy of India, Reconstruction Wing). LoC aimed to support reconstructions works in the areas of housing, road and transports, health, education, cultural heritage sites power and disaster risk management. USD 50 million from Line of Credit was pledged to support the reconstruction of 50,000 private houses in Nuwakot and Gorkha districts in Nepal where EXIM Bank of India has released Nepali rupees 3.10 billion to Government of Nepal from “concessional Line of Credit towards reimbursement of 3rd tranche of housing reconstruction according to a press release issued by Indian Embassy in Kathmandu” (My Republica, 2019).

During the state visit of former Prime Minister of Nepal, Sher Bahadur Deuba to India from August 23-27, 2017, at the invitation of Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi. The Prime Minister of India reiterated India’s commitment to work with the Government of Nepal to expedite post-earthquake reconstruction projects in a time-bound manner. The finalization of modalities for implementation as well as identification of projects in the four identified sectors for India’s reconstruction assistance. “It was agreed to identify at the earliest projects under the US\$ 750 million Line of Credit for post-earthquake reconstruction” (Ministry of External Affairs, Website Government of India, 2017). Following are the Agreements and MoU signed on 24 August, 2017:

- i. MoU on Modalities for Utilization of India’s Housing Grant Component to support Reconstruction of 50,000 Houses
- ii. MoU on Implementation of the Grant Component of India’s Post-Earthquake Reconstruction Package in the Education Sector in Nepal
- iii. MoU on Implementation of the Grant Component of India’s Post-Earthquake Reconstruction Package in Cultural Heritage Sector in Nepal

5.2. India's Interests in providing aid in 2015 earthquake of Nepal

Apart from the material and logistical support from the Indian administration, the political rhetoric utilized was also one of empathy and emotive support to the masses in Nepal. Prime Minister Modi tweeted on April 25, the same day the first earthquake struck, that 'Nepal's pain is our pain.' (Angre, 2015, NDTV) By this Prime Minister, Narendra Modi's pledged India's assistance to Nepal, been highly appreciated by the Nepal government and its people. Though to look at the history India is one of the oldest donor nations which has maintained the topmost position from 1965-66 to 1978-79, has particular objectives, political and economic while giving aid to Nepal. This is but natural since every donor nation uses economic aid as a diplomatic tool and political lever to achieve its objectives in the recipient countries, the strategic objectives are of primary importance while political and economic objectives are of secondary only though they are complementary and supplementary one another. India has been using its aid as an instrument of "economic and political" to achieve these objectives ever since the beginning of its aid program in Nepal (Malla, 2012, p. 31). However Indian scholars are explaining it as an "India has historically been an aid receiver, however, since independence, India has been a prominent aid donor to its neighbouring countries and Nepal being one of the earliest recipients of foreign aid" (Goyal, 2018, p.9). The economic assistance provided by India to other countries including Nepal is described as "development cooperation/partnership, not as foreign aid" (Saran, 2014, p.2).

"Disasters can be used to reset ties" (Comfort, 2007, p. 291). Prior to Modi's visit to Nepal in August 2014, it had been 17 years since an Indian Head of Government had officially visited the country. Modi's government attempted to do just that in Nepal. "The earthquakes in Nepal provided India an opportunity to further strengthen its strategic position in Nepal through the utilization of "disaster diplomacy" in the form of extensive

relief work (Chand, 2017, p.540). In essence, the largest relief effort during the Nepal earthquake was from India. It formed a part of the Modi government's attempts at making overtures to Nepal after years of tumultuous relations India in this situation came to play a major role with its interest in providing aid while before. "Indian foreign aid programs in Nepal had been competing with that of other major aid donors from the very beginning (Malla, 2012, p.38).

History of this region shows that India and China have always been jostling for increasing their influence on Nepal. "After Nepal became a crucial nation bridging two emerging world powers with a tough international relation. China continues to be a threat to both the US as well as India because of its increasing power to bring substantive changes in the world order" (Upadhyaya 2012, p.83). After Nepal was declared a secular federal democratic republic in 2006 by abolishing the 238-year-old monarchy both India and China have increased their influence on Nepal's polity and economy (Regmi, 2016, p.9). Hence, their interventions in the aftermath of the earthquake should be understood as a continuation of their increasing competition in the regional geopolitics. Both events, earthquakes and constitutional change turned out to be a symbolic victory of Chinese soft power but a foreign policy failure for India. We can see the reason for that "initially, India had to compete only with the U.S. aid program but after China's entry into the aid field in 1956, India had to expand its aid program in competition with China" (Malla, 2012, p.30). This shows China is really making it hard for India to impose its national interest.

5.3. China's Response to Nepal in 2015 earthquake

After India, China too, well-versed in earthquake rescue and relief efforts from its own tragic experiences, moved quickly to respond. China's first rescue team, "consisting of 62 people, 40 rescuers, 10 medical workers, and 12 seismic experts, and six sniffer

dogs,” arrived in Nepal on Sunday. (Tiezzi, 2015, The Diplomat). A special medical team and tons of medical aid was brought. During the international conference on Nepal’s reconstruction in June, 2015, “Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi made the announcement to offer 3 billion Chinese yuan (483 million U.S. dollars)” to help quake-stricken Nepal in rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts as part of a package of aid plans to Nepal at an International Conference on Nepal's Reconstruction (Scobell, Lin and Shatz, 2018, p.143). During the conference, Chinese aid pledge was more dedicated towards infrastructural repair, and wider humanitarian support was strongly focused in the Nepal-China border areas Rasuwa, Dolkha-Sindhupalchowk and Mustang. “Key themes of response included emergency search and rescue operations, road openings, village reconstruction and electrification, cash and in-kind donations, and specific locations and durations of China’s relief efforts in Nepal” (Murton, 2016, p.5). China was among top five bilateral donors in disbursing the highest amount of foreign aid to Nepal in the last fiscal year 2017-18. Chinese assistance has also been used in construction of a hydropower project and a transmission line, post-earthquake reconstruction, budgetary support to the Nepali government, among others, according to the report.

The Rt. Hon. Mr. K P Sharma Oli, Prime Minister of Nepal paid an official visit to China from June 19 to 24, 2018 at the invitation of H. E. Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the PRC. China provided aid on Nepal’s reconstruction to be used in the mutually selected 25 major projects for the period of 2016-2018. “The two countries signed three separate bilateral Agreements on Economic and Technical Cooperation on 23 December 2016, 15 August 2017 and 21 June 2018 for providing Chinese grant of one billion Yuan each to Nepal for implementing post-disaster reconstruction projects,

livelihood projects and other mutually agreed projects” (Government of Nepal, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018).

5.4. China’s Interests in providing aid in 2015 earthquake of Nepal

It seems that the primary motive of all countries offering aid after the earthquake is humanitarian. China’s relief efforts did not come attached with any form of rhetoric from its political establishment at first. Instead, it was much muted and focused on the relief efforts. Nonetheless because of the complex history of the region, India will continue to play a significantly higher role in Nepal. Though India has long seen Nepal as part of its sphere of influence, China has in recent years stepped up efforts to increase its role across Central and South Asia, an effort President Xi Jinping calls the “One Road, One Belt” initiative (Rauhala, 2015, Times). “Nepal with its population of about 30 million or so, the level of Chinese engagement with Nepal, at one of the most sensitive parts of its border, is actually quite small compared with China’s engagement with a similarly sized country in Africa” (Gurung, 2015, China File). In some ways, China is beginning to realize that perhaps they did not pay proper attention to their engagement with Nepal, which is important for their own interests in the geopolitical landscape. Scholars in the region see Nepal as a strategically important country where “India and China are increasingly competing for influence diplomatically and economically in addition to humanitarian concerns, China likely intended its support to signal its commitment to Nepal in the aftermath of the disaster” (Pearson, Rastello and Tweed, 2015, Bloomberg). Despite China’s more low-key disaster diplomacy, it was not exclusively humanitarian in nature. Geostrategic considerations were a major part of the relief operations as well. Politicization of emergency response when Taiwanese response teams were turned away because of diplomatic hurdles with China in a situation where Nepalese lives were at stake” (Wendelbo, 2016, p.9). The Taiwanese government offered to send search and

rescue teams to Nepal but were refused. It was widely speculated in the media that it was Chinese pressure that was preventing Taiwanese groups from taking part in the rescue operations. Nevertheless, China too used “disaster relief as a political tool; it prevented Taiwan from sending an official delegation” (Chand, 2017, p. 542).

China’s engagement in Nepal takes a variety of forms such as “economic investment, trade, aid, infrastructural development, military assistance, diplomatic exchanges, as well as cultural and initiatives” (Campbell, 2012, p. 78). “Tibetan refugee population in Nepal and its hydroelectric potential” are the main factors that influenced the increase in China aid to Nepal (Adhikari, 2016, p.38). China’s takeover of Tibet in 1950 created new dynamics in the north, with Nepal becoming of geopolitical concern for China in relation to Tibetan refugee populations. Since then, China remained active in Nepal primarily “to curtail pro-Tibet political activities and to ensure that Nepal suppresses possible anti-China politics by Western NGOs and governments” (Khadka, 1997, p.61). On the other hand, in terms of Nepal as a hydroelectric potential; the world has witnessed that the Chinese economy had been unshakeable since the 1990s, growth rates slowed significantly in the first quarters of 2008. “One way in which China seeks to harness the energy needed to support its enormous infrastructure is through hydropower” (Bosshard, 2009, p.44). China is energy deficient, which creates a barrier to its further development. For instance, China is heavily dependent on coal and petroleum to supply energy to its rapidly expanding manufacturing sector, and the growth of China has increased power demand for domestic consumption. “The Chinese Government, which has expressed its interest in reducing its carbon footprint and coal dependence, has shown a preference for expanding the domestic hydropower sector” (Marslen, 2014, p.7). As China’s water resources decline, limited domestic resources mean that imported power is required to

meet energy demand and Nepal can provide a partial solution as China sees Nepal as a great source of energy in hydropower supply.

5.5. Lesson Learnt

The earthquakes presented an opportunity for the two regional powers to demonstrate their position by supporting Nepal in a time of crisis. India's overwhelming response to Nepal's earthquake emergency was set in a wider context of political rhetoric. After the earthquake India immediately contributed to relief assistance. India committed to releasing these funds through Nepal's Finance Ministry, although it made some specific allocations and tied loans to the contracting of Indian consultants. By July 2018, however, India's pledged funds had yet been disbursed, in part the result of delays in setting-up Nepal's National Reconstruction Authority, bureaucratic hurdles and likely foot-dragging. China's response to the earthquake was also framed by an opinion of geo-political and geo-economics engagements notably via providing grants, infrastructure development assistance and alternative routes to supply construction materials. China was the second-largest donor and the first in terms of actual disbursements, but chose to allocate a reported \$767 million in grants to its own projects, including two roads to China and a major temple in Kathmandu. Unlike India, China thus did not rely on Nepalese reconstruction authorities to implement its pledges, most of which would be implemented by Chinese contractors. Geo-economic interests quickly became apparent as India and China promoted their own materials and designs in response to shelter needs and requirements for longer-term earthquake-resistant buildings. "Millions of dollars were spent on purchasing tents, tarpaulins, plastic containers, wire, bamboo, medicines and other non-food items supplied mainly from India while readily available local materials were bypassed" (Government of Nepal, Nepal Reconstruction Authority, 2016, p.15). Indian and Chinese companies along with their Nepali counterparts competed to

get as large a share as possible of Nepal's reconstruction funds (Chand, 2017, p. 541). Such companies also sought to sign agreements with the government to build mega-infrastructure projects such as cement factories, sand quarries, rebuilding roads and initiating new hydropower dams (Murton, Lord, and Beazley, 2016, p. 57). It was clear during the rescue period that even though Nepal's neighbours framed these attempts as 'political goodwill', they also sought to win support from Nepal and to pursue economic interests, thereby limiting the power and influence of competitors (Paudel and Billon, 2018, p. 13).

In August of 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had visited Kathmandu twice to mend ties and counter growing Chinese influence in Nepal. In addition, the Modi government's swift evacuation of Indian citizens was a "political win-win in India" and the rescue of citizens of other states not only saved lives but also elevated India's prestige internationally (Chand, 2017, p. 540). India has extensive influence on Nepal's economy and politics, while China and Nepal share a border covered with high mountain peaks. Another primary reason many Nepalis are attracted to the prospects of a development partnership with China has to do with past treatment by Nepal's other giant neighbour, India. "India has often meddled in Nepal's domestic politics, sometimes by preying upon its landlocked status and imposed blockade on Nepal in 1962, 1989, and (unofficially) in 2015 after the country promulgated a controversial new constitution" (Gill, *The Diplomat*, 2019). A prolonged blockade of its border crossings with India in 2015 and 2016 left Nepal short of fuel and medicine for months and Nepal saw China as an opportunity to "hedge what they might see as India's excessive influence" in the region (Aziz, *Aljazeera*, 2019).

In recent years, Nepal has leveraged its strategic location to increase its negotiation power in trade, investment and resource flow, using the overlapping Chinese and Indian

‘arcs of influence’ in the region (Walcott, 2010, p.81). To insert foreign political interests in the region India and China have also been mobilizing the framework of aid to Nepal, with aid projects mostly involving large-scale infrastructure developments. India has generally pursued its political interests in Nepal through conventional methods of control, divide and conquer, as well as political patronage informed by a ‘big brother mentality’ (Kumar, 2011, p.89). China, in contrast, is understood to combine a ‘soft power’ approach that is more politically neutral and focuses on capital investment and infrastructure development (Kurlantzick, 2007, p. 18). For some, China is seeking to weaken India’s dominance and strengthen its own influence in Nepali affairs (Cowan 2013, p.101), while for others, China is not directly competing for influence with India but rather ‘wants to retain enough sway over Nepal to ensure that the Americans don’t use India to make mischief on its Tibetan border’ (Baral, 2017, p.1).

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

The Chinese and Indian aid programs to Nepal after the earthquake helped in reconstruction assistance reinforce the claims made regarding their different motivations for giving aid. For both country opportunity, particularly for political and economic gain, is a defining characteristic. India and China's aid support for reconstruction are moving it further away from the ethos of just helping in crisis. Both countries have made a significant contribution to the Nepal government in plan policy and in the process of reconstruction, as a closed neighbour, since they announced their large support from donor conferences and while they are influenced by differing motivations. The greatest similarity between India and China has been and will continue to be the uneasy interconnection between their self-interest and altruism.

This chapter concludes the thesis by drawing together the examinations of Indian and Chinese aid towards Nepal after the earthquake of 2015. By analysis of donors' motifs based on the attitude, practice, trend and theory, Chapter Two and Three show that every donor country has their own motivations while providing aid. Although some of the aid is motivated by humanitarian reasons as well and some aid programs are a practice with the intention to counter another donor country in the home of the recipient country. So all the presented chapters have been combined to illustrate the motifs of foreign aid of India and China in Nepal. A discussion on the actual aid programs and its motif in each following country needs to discuss their policy. The aid programs of both donors, their aid conditionality are examined as both countries have some sort of similarities that exist between India and China aid to Nepal.

India and China quest to be seen as a responsible neighbour and donor when they quickly respond to the earthquake emergency. Both countries' heads of the government

announced they are with Nepal's problem and it shows that they want to give a message to Nepal that they are a good neighbour. On the other hand, it would be fair to construe their intention as part of a greater altruistic focus in their aid policy after earthquake recovery through the aid patterns they provide before and their mechanism to support in reconstruction of Nepal. When they want their technology to be used, their policy needs to be implemented and that shows the motive is not only a humanitarian or just to be a good neighbour. The political, economic, security, countering each other's interests are the main priority. With the earthquake, the aftermath reconstruction need of Nepali government inspired them to use aid as their favour with recipient nations. As Nepal is geopolitically and strategically in an important place in the South Asian region as a close neighbour they found this opportunity to safeguard their political strategic interest. In international politics, "international assistance is tied to a multitude of motivations, usually, a mixture of humanitarian and non-humanitarian purposes (Bertland, 1993, p. 153). Thus, the Chinese and Indian government increasingly try to be the backbone in reconstructing Nepal and both countries were quite efficient in portraying a positive image in the country. Nepal has no chance than to be receptive of increasing influence. We can relate this with the donor phenomenon as the " emergency situations can be used to "pursue interests by the larger power" (Clark, 2014, p. 28).

While observing India and China's pattern of the help immediately and after the earthquake "China has comparatively committed far less for long-term reconstruction, its disaster relief effort was one of its largest overseas" (Chand, 2017, p. 542). China comes with a large technical medical team immediately but there were not army aircraft, it might be the reason that China was calculating India's compass to China's growing footprint in Nepal. Unlike China, India mobilized military aircraft immediately was a clear clue of Nepal's important geostrategic concerns and importance of this place in the

region. Though China also shows its interest clearly even it does not expose military hardware. However, China was a major backbone to the relief effort of Nepal and its willingness to mobilize and focus on the recovery of Nepal is the clear need of China's interests in Nepal. After this earthquake when the country faced huge damage, Nepal needs helping hands for the quick response and long term recovery. When bilateral and multilateral donors are interested, the recipient country does allow opportunities to donors to further the motifs which is an unavoidable condition. "As Nepal was already becoming a strategic political space for Sino–Indian interactions before the 2015 earthquakes. India and China's immediate post-disaster mobilization and their long-term commitments can be contextualized within the intensifying competitive interactions between the two states in Nepal" (Chand, 2017, p. 537).

Because of being an immediate neighbour, India and China have humanitarian motivations that are only seen and exist as the part of emergency rescue and relief efforts. In another part, both India and China's interest in recovery assistance and aid efforts clearly indicates that their government has a strong commitment to holding a strategic advantage as Nepal carries an important place in a geostrategic way. India and China committed long terms of projects in Nepal after the earthquakes. By which we can clearly say that they have self-motif to advance their interest in Nepal and counter each other's strategy as they are doing before the earthquake as well.

Strategy to counter each other, by India and China, has greatly affected the nature of post-earthquake assistance. For both India and China, a commitment of their own interest, continue to attempt to ensure that Nepal as a small developing nation which situated in an important place in the region needs assistance to foothold in the regional politics. That for India likelihood, however, has declined greatly when the communist leader is in government and by China's growing interest, however a justification for aid

reflecting the aforementioned self-motif rationale. Comparatively, with the declining United States and British roles as aid donors in Nepal, both India and China have widened the countries they give to. The concern, now, is more with being seen to be doing well in the eyes of the regional country's population and the international community, and countering each other in a region and India and China furthermore wants to prevent other actors in the region. Both India and China have their own duty to maintain their efforts, and both will presumably continue to do so. India and China's geographic location, as noted, has had a major bearing on its economic assistance levels to the region. The south of China constitutes much of the 'arc' of its immediate security concerns. And India also has security concerns as it has a threat by the border shared countries. Both nations cannot be further away from the region, the security threat from the south Asian region they both have. Their aid aims to address the region's problem now is an important strategy to influence the region. So the aim of aid towards Nepal is the same as well. India and China both trade flow towards Nepal are high and that might be a commercial motif also guides their aid aim. Both donors, as noted, have a connection with Nepal dating back several centuries, which has influenced their desire to have aid programs in this country. However, security and commercial, political motivations, have more of a bearing on aid flows than bilateral affinity. This rhetoric helps to justify India and China's aid levels to Nepal. Indian and Chinese aid programs to Nepal after the earthquake assistance reinforce the claims made regarding their different motivations for giving aid. For both, opportunity particularly for their geopolitical strategy, internal security, is a defining characteristic. "It is evident that Beijing's interest and activity in Kathmandu comprise three key considerations: the development of energy resources and access to hydropower infrastructure; the expansion of transport corridors for increased export and trade to Nepal and India; and close observation of and control

over Tibetan exile communities across Nepal. These dimensions of Chinese interests and engagements in Nepal are further complicated by Beijing's challenge to Delhi's historical hegemonic power in Kathmandu and ongoing paradigm shifts in influence and dependencies between Nepal, India, and China" (Murton, 2016, p.6).

Post-Disaster Reconstruction and rehabilitation is a complex process that involves the interaction of social, technological and economic factors. "It is quite obvious that in countries like Nepal with weak governance, reconstruction efforts may be hampered through institutional bureaucracy, corruption, inadequate coordination, the inexperience of construction management and pressures from government and humanitarian agencies" (Barestein, 2012, p. 83). Now, with the new lesson after this 2015 earthquake disaster, Nepal needs a reform agenda in managing aid because we lack that in the present day. Hence we have a slow pace of reconstruction. Development partners in terms of donor agencies have greatly contributed to the reconstruction process. "But the ineffectiveness of the provision of humanitarian aid into reconstruction after the Nepal earthquake where enormous money did not directly reach victims, where much (more than 75% of the total budget) of it went on salaries, accommodation and transport for the NGO workers themselves. However, even if the funding reached the ground, they are usually temporary or not what the affected population actually needed, but guided by the partners' development agenda" (Kantipur National Daily, 2017). The donor does have an interest so recipient country also has to be clear on their interest and need to approve aid flow systematically so that aid can be an actual blessing as developing assistance So government need to launch proper aid policy mechanism so that it can't generate tussle between international community and government as happened in 2015 where In course of the response phase, the relationship between Nepal government and the international community was not encouraging. There was the problem of mutual trust and allegation

between the two sides. “The international communities did not fully trust the government; questioning its ability to deliver services while the government wasn’t happy because the donor communities wanted to distribute relief assistance through their agents whereas Nepalese government sought any assistance to be collected into the Prime Minister Relief Aid Fund and then distributed to the affected areas. Actually, the government wanted to adopt a one-door policy” (Lam, Khanna & Kuipers, 2017, p.31). However, the relationship between the Nepal Government and the International Community did improve as time elapsed.

In the time of emergency India and China's aid philosophy is moving it further away from the ethos of immediate neighbour, they are busy safeguarding the interest and countering each other. This argument can be supported by the time of such a high crisis India imposed a blockade to Nepal and China claimed to be supportive but did not insist on opening the Khasa border. However, both countries have made a significant contribution to Nepal through aid, and via emergency rescue and relief material since the earthquake hit hard in 2015 but they are influenced by differing motivation. The greatest similarity between them has been and will continue to be the uneasy countering each other for their geo-political-strategic interest in Nepal.

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