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# National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF)

*“Collective Campaign for Collective Identity”* Issue #2



**NIWF Team Extended Congratulations to Mr. Nand Lal Majhi on his Appointment as the Vice-President of the Social Welfare Council.**

heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to Mr. Nand Lal Majhi on his appointment as the Vice President of the Social Welfare Council. We wished him a successful tenure in his new role.



## NIWF at the High Level Political Forum 2024

National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF)'s Chairperson Ms. Suni Lama, Vice-Chair Ms. Yasso Kanti Bhattachan and Member of Gandaki Province Hon. Bimala Gauchan participated at the High Level Political Forum 2024, from **8th July to 18th July 2024** in UN Women Headquarters, New York. Ms. Yasso Kanti Bhattachan, Vice-Chair of NIWF, was a speaker at the side event titled "Mapping the Path to Feminist Climate Justice: Redefining the Pact of the Future." She provided valuable insights from the perspective of Indigenous Women and offered several recommendations. Ms. Bhattachan emphasized the necessity of addressing intersectionality in any climate action policy, plan, or program. She discussed the significant impact of climate change on Indigenous Peoples in Nepal, highlighting how the livelihoods of Indigenous Women have been adversely affected.



## **Chair of NIWF Ms. Suni Lama attended the National Consultative Workshop on “National Targets for the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan” (NBSAP)**

On July 26, 2024, Ms. Suni Lama, the Chairperson of National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF), attended the National Consultative Workshop on "National Targets for the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan" (NBSAP). This significant event was organized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in collaboration with the Ministry of Forests and Environment, with the aim of refining and enhancing the country's biodiversity strategy. The feedback and insights gathered from these group discussions are expected to play a crucial role in finalizing the NBSAP, ensuring it is robust, inclusive, and capable of effectively addressing the nation's biodiversity challenges.

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## Orientation Program for the new staff members of NIWF at the Office

On July 29, 2024, National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF) hosted an orientation program in secretariat to introduce and welcome the new staff members of "Climate Action For Indigenous Women In Nepal (CLAN)" project and "Linking and Learning through Action Research and river rejuvenation" project. The event began with a warm welcome from the NIWF team, setting a positive tone for the day. The primary purpose of the orientation was to familiarize the new staff with the core values and guiding principles of NIWF. This included an in-depth presentation on the organization's vision, mission, and goals, emphasizing the commitment to empowering Indigenous Women and promoting their rights. The session provided a comprehensive overview of NIWF's strategic objectives and the impact they aim to achieve through their various initiatives.

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## **NIWF hosted a reception dinner with Q'apaj Conde, Associate Programme Management Officer at UN Biodiversity and Co-chair of the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus**

On July 31, 2024, the National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF) hosted a reception dinner with Q'apaj Conde, Associate Programme Management Officer at UN Biodiversity and Co-chair of the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus. The event celebrated the visit of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat Team and the High Ambition Coalition (HAC) Team to Nepal, who were in the country for a regional capacity-building workshop titled "Achieving Target 3: Beyond Boundaries." The workshop was held over two and a half days at ICIMOD, Khumaltar. The reception dinner was facilitated by NIWF's Program Officer, Ms. Saraswati Sherpa. During the event, Mr. Kamal Sampang Rai presented on the development of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) in Nepal. Hon. Chair Ram Bahadur Thapa discussed the role of Nepali Indigenous Nationalities in biodiversity conservation. Hon. Bishnu Prasad Chaudhary also provided insights on the relationship between Indigenous Peoples (IPs) and biodiversity. Mr. Ghana Shyam Gurung shared his perspectives on biodiversity, and Mr. Vijay Kumar Singh offered additional insights. Our special guest speaker, Q'apaj Conde, shared valuable insights on Indigenous Peoples and Biodiversity from a global perspective.





## **NIWF's Executive Director participated in the Subregional capacity-building workshop on Target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework for South Asia**

NIWF's Executive Director Ms. Dwarika Thebe participated in the Subregional capacity-building workshop on Target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework for South Asia from **29-31 July 2024**, followed by a consultation on Leveraging the prospects and potential of other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) for transboundary cooperation in the Hindu Kush Himalaya from July 31 to 01 August 2024, in Kathmandu, Nepal. The workshop was jointly organized by ICIMOD, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People.

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## 5 Day Intensive training for the trainers of the newly launched project "Climate Action For Indigenous Women In Nepal (CLAN)."

From 30th July to 3rd August 2024, National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF) and SALASAN Nepal conducted a 5 day training session for the trainers of the newly launched project "Climate Action For Indigenous Women In Nepal (CLAN)." An insightful presentation covering climate change, relevant terminology, and the specific impacts of climate change on Indigenous Women was presented. Various technical aspects related to Climate change, provided a comprehensive overview to equip the trainers for their roles in the project. The main aim of the training was to familiarize trainers with the project's objectives and agenda, equipping them with the necessary skills to effectively contribute to the project.

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## **NIWF submitted the Position Paper to the Chautara Sangachokgadhi Municipality.**

On August 5, 2024, National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF) submitted the Position Paper to the Chautara Sangachokgadhi Municipality. The handover was led by NIWF's Chairperson, Ms. Suni Lama, alongside Treasurer Ms. Sushila Gole, Sachita Tamang, and other dedicated Women. They handed the document to Acting Mayor, Ms. Sita Thapa. During the event, Ms. Suni Lama emphasized NIWF's commitment to generating income and providing family and social rehabilitation for Indigenous Women who have returned from foreign employment. She urged the municipality to take proactive measures to connect these Women with income-generating opportunities. The program was facilitated by Sabnam Lama, and Savita Tamang read the statement from the Position Paper. NIWF has consistently advocated for the rights and welfare of Indigenous women returning from abroad, focusing on their economic empowerment and social reintegration.





## Rally on the Occasion of International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

National Indigenous Women Forum participated in a rally held in observance of the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, celebrated annually on August 9. This day is dedicated to raising awareness about the needs and challenges faced by Indigenous Communities. The rally brought together many Indigenous People, each proudly representing their community and displaying their cultural banners.

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## 2 Days of training on discussion and review on the policy of Bhumlu Indigenous Workplan with members of Bhumlu Rural Municipality

NIWF kicked off a two-day training on discussion and review on the policy of Bhumlu Indigenous Workplan with members of Bhumlu Rural Municipality. The training was facilitated by Ms. Saraswati Sherpa and Ms. Dwarika Thebe. Ms. Suni Lama, Chairperson of NIWF, warmly welcomed all participants to the event.

Our chief guest, Mr. Prem Bahadur Bhujel, delivered a brief speech, and our guest, Mr. Sudarshan Bhattarai, also gave a welcome speech. Our resource person for Day 1 was Ms. Chanda Thapa. She delivered an insightful and comprehensive presentation on CEDAW General Recommendation 39, which focuses on the rights of Indigenous Women and Girls. Mr. Kamal Sampang Rai, delivered a presentation on biodiversity, focusing on how climate change is impacting Nepal's rich biodiversity. He also explored the deep connection between



Mr. Bijay Kumar Singh, delivered an in-depth presentation on the impacts of climate change on Indigenous Communities. He focused on how these changes disproportionately affect Indigenous Communities, whose livelihoods are closely tied to the land and natural resources.

Mr. Hom Yamphu, delivered an informative presentation on how key international frameworks such as the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and ILO Convention 169 can be effectively integrated into the procedures of Bhumlu Rural Municipality.



## 26th Annual General Meeting of NIWF

On August 13th, 2024, National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF) convened its 26th Annual General Meeting, a significant milestone in the organization's ongoing commitment to advancing the rights and well-being of Indigenous Women and Girls. The meeting was chaired by Ms. Suni Lama, the Chairperson of NIWF.

Ms. Man Maya Tamang, the General Secretary, took the stage to present NIWF's Annual

the Treasurer, presented the Annual Financial Report, providing a detailed overview of the organization’s financial health, including expenditures, funding sources, and financial management strategies.

The meeting also addressed administrative matters, including the appointment of a new auditor to ensure transparency and accountability in the upcoming fiscal year. Additionally, plans for the next fiscal year were discussed, with a focus on strategic goals, programmatic priorities, and the continued advocacy for Indigenous rights and social justice. The AGM served as a pivotal moment for NIWF to reaffirm its mission and chart a course for the future.



## NIWF as one of the partner organizations in Nepal Youth Summit 2024



National Youth Council, successfully concluded the Nepal Youth Summit, in partnership with the United Nations in Nepal and with the support of the **National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF)** and other Civil Society Organizations. The summit aimed to empower youth voices and advocate for national and global actions on critical issues affecting young people. Ms. Anisha Buda, the Media and Communication Assistant of National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF), represented the organization by actively supporting the planning and implementation of the thematic group on Climate Change, Disaster and Environmental Justice, and Agrifood System Transformation. She was responsible for supporting and guiding the thematic group.



## **NIWF participated in the Asia Regional Dialogue for the Review of Trees 2.0**

NIWF's Executive Director Ms. Dwarika Thebe and Media and Communication Assistant Ms. Anisha Buda participated in the Asia Regional Dialogue for the Review of Trees 2.0 on **27th and 28th August 2024**. The program kicked off in the presence of around 35 participants including representatives from IP & LC networks and organizations from 6 countries in Asia: Nepal, Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines, Indonesia and Bangladesh organized by CIPRED and ART Secretariat.

The workshop aimed to bring together Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities leaders across Asia for sharing of perspectives and experiences in REDD+ initiatives and ART TREES standard's role in the recognition of the rights and customary tenure system of Indigenous Peoples.

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## Media Coverage of NIWF



**३० औँ विश्व आदिवासी दिवसका अवसरमा राष्ट्रिय आदिवासी जनजाति महिला मन्चले कार्यक्रम गर्दै ।**

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Soldiers stand guard following a strike in Dhaka, Bangladesh on Saturday. The deployment of military forces follows days of clashes during nationwide protests against government job quotas.

## Oli's floor test today amid calls to make 2-party deal public

The prime minister is poised to win the support of over two thirds of House of Representatives members.

By PUNJSHYAM PUNDEL

KATHMANDU, July 20

Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, who became prime minister on July 13, is set to seek a vote of confidence in the House of Representatives on Sunday.

Oli is expected to secure support from the Janata Samakhya Party (JP) and the Nepali Congress Party (NC). The agreement reportedly stipulates that Oli will hand over the premiership to Shree after two years.

During the floor test, Prime Minister Oli is likely to receive votes from the Janata Samakhya Party (JP) and the Nepali Congress Party (NC). The combined strength of all these parties is 261, eight seats more than the required two-thirds majority in the 273-member House.

However, while a bulk of government formation, Congress General Secretary Gagan Thapa has not made any statement on whether Oli will hand over the prime ministership to Shree after two years as per the July 1 agreement between the country's two largest parties.

Thapa's remark comes at a time when political observers expect Shree to take the reins of the Congress (M) coalition.

Speaking at the 10th NP Anniversary (NP) in Kathmandu, Thapa said that Prime Minister Oli, one of the signatories to the deal, should meet out the agreement from Parliament's confidence room when the discussion for the trust vote.

"Though it has been said that two parties had concluded the agreement on Monday, the government is not ready to do so," Thapa said. "I am confident that the prime minister will meet out the agreement to the House."

Thapa demanded that Prime Minister Oli assure the Congress that he will give over the government's leadership to the largest as agreed.

While stating that his party will honorably implement the agreement, he expressed doubts whether the JPP would do that, too.

On behalf of the Nepali Congress, I can take responsibility that the written agreement between the parties



Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli

will not be violated from our side," Thapa said. "We expect the same level of commitment from the JPP side."

However, other Congress leaders said that despite the party general secretary's optimism, the party largely trusts Prime Minister Oli to do the right thing.

"There are no inherent political problems unless we are not clear on why our general secretary implemented the agreement," MP Babu chief of the party said, but he was confident that Shree will honorably implement the agreement.

A JPP, vice-chairman expressed doubts whether the JPP would do that, too.

On behalf of the Nepali Congress, I can take responsibility that the written agreement between the parties

## Around 800 Nepali students head back home from Bangladesh

By POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, July 20

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has said that approximately 800 Nepali students have left Bangladesh for their home or via land border points in Bangladesh.

"The Ministry of Nepal in Dhaka has coordinated with the students to facilitate their safe travel from various points in Bangladesh to Dhaka airport or to nearest border points," the ministry said in a post on its late evening on Saturday. "It has been closely coordinating with universities, concerned authorities, and law enforcement agencies in Bangladesh."

The ministry requested the government of Bangladesh to ensure safety and security of all Nepali students in the South Asian country that has witnessed violent agitation in the past few weeks.

17 more Nepal-bound. Foreign ministry urges others to fill online forms for the travel.

## Bankariya people have become squatters in their own land

The endangered community members, known as the 'children of land', are rendered landless, a violation of their fundamental right to life, security, shelter and dignity.

By ANANT RAY

KATHMANDU, July 20

Many over-60 Bankariya Bankariya often operations from her people, known as 'children of land', are rendered landless in their own land. This is in fact a consequence of many Bankariya individuals who are of Nepal's most marginalized indigenous communities.

They have built houses but they can't call them their 'home'; they have land but no legal ownership. And when the children of the land have become landless, squatters on their ancestral territory, a situation that has rendered their fundamental and inalienable rights.

Bankariya was born and raised in the forest and lived a nomadic life until she was 16 when her family and other Bankariya people moved to forest settlements.

The Bankariya, some called it 'Mankariya' or 'Mankariya'. Their Mankariya's word is in Mankariya doesn't live on the verge of extinction.

lacked by landlessness and a lack of modern skills and knowledge.

"They are one of the 12 endangered tribes recognized by the local government, alongside Kusunda, Mechi, Sherpa, Tharu, Khas, Lepcha, Magar, Raj and Kiratpuri."

They face constant threat of relocation from the land under Parsa National Park.

"The Bankariya are the latest ethnic tribal group to adopt a settled lifestyle, according to research by Columbia Forest University, an anthropology professor at Pokhara Multiple Campus. In the course of abandoning nomadic life and transitioning to modern agriculture, they face issues like land shortage, lack of agricultural land, health and education problems, and illiteracy."

ry economic participation, massive threats for the Bankariya tribe as their land is being government, and forest lands, under Parsa National Park's jurisdiction under their ability to survive and establish themselves.

In 2010, the government signed a major land deal with the Bankariya, granting them six hectares of land as livelihood forest. However, with the deal not to expire next year and ongoing land issues, uncertainty about their land tenure persists, says Babu Lama, chairperson of the National Indigenous Women Forum (NIWF).

Initially, settling into a new lifestyle was challenging for the Bankariya, who relied on frequent forest visits for food and herbs. "We're not adapted to it," Babu Lama says.

"We are still able to connect with nature," she says. The forest as part of Parsa Wildlife Reserve (PWR), which was once their primary source of subsistence and cultural identity, is now off limits to them.

Continued on page 2

Suspicious of Congress-UN deal, RPP de-vote against

ideas



कान्तिपुर समाचार

## वनकरिया महिलाका कथा : फिरन्ते जीवनदेखि 'अर्गानिक' साबुन उत्पादनसम्म





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