

NRN Australia First National Conference July 10, 2005

NRN Australia held its long awaited first national conference on July 10, 2005 in Sydney. The widely communicated and participated one day event was attended by key leaders of all Nepali organizations, Nepali business community, professionals, students, youths, workers and people of great range of walks of their lives. One of the most important parts of the conference was the encouraging number of interstate participants that travelled from different states including Victoria, Queensland, Australian Capital Territory and South Australia.

Almost 250 key participants from wider cross section of the Nepali Diaspora in Australia participated in this conference. The event was inaugurated by NRN International Coordinator, Mr. Bhim Udas, who flew from overseas along with his colleague duo ICC Members Deepak Khadka from Hong Kong and Ranjana Udas from Rangoon. Guidance message from ICC President Dr Upendra Mahato was read out by prominent community figure Shree Napit followed by inauguration of the event and opening address from ICC Coordinator Bhim Udas. Floor discussions, presentations from state representatives, community leaders, dinner, mutual introduction and catching up with old friends were few of the highlights of the day. The conference concluded commencing the steps towards election of first formal working committee for NRN Australia. This process will continue until all states elect their representatives to represent in NRN Australia National Coordination Council (NCC). Process of consultation in selecting the new advisory committee for NRN Australia NCC and executive members under nominated quota is underway. The NRN Australia First National Conference has decided to honour all Nepalese Community Organizations in Australia as patrons of NRN Australia and seek guidance from them in ongoing basis.

Almost all of the speakers and participants agreed the dual citizenship provision can increase the inflow of investment funds to Nepal, skill transfer from the readily available skill pool in different countries and improve employment rates in Nepal. Nepalis are nepalis regardless where they live and what they do, their heart and minds are back in Nepal therefore let them participate in the work to be done towards making a peaceful and prosperous Nepal.

Full Reports:

The long awaited and widely communicated First National Conference of NRN Australia was held on 10 July 2005 at Marana Auditorium Hall, Sydney.

International Co-ordination Council (ICC) co-ordinator, members and the adviser were also present at the conference.

ICC co-ordinator Mr. Bhim Udas inaugurated the First National Conference of Australia. He outlined why NRN is needed. Furthermore, he outlined the objectives of NRN and the

strategic activities needed to achieve its goals. He also highlighted the events and the activities that were currently being carried out by NRN globally. He informed about the progress especially the NRN bills and changes to the legislation currently being lobbied with the Nepali Government. He gave a hint about the struggles, obstacles and challenges being faced by NRN. He informed us about the formation of NRN chapters in different countries. Australia is the 11th country of the ICC to establish the NRN National Coordination Council. He encouraged attendance and participation in the second Global NRN Conference to be held in Kathmandu Nepal from 7th to 9th October 2005.

ICC member Mrs. Ranjana Udas expressed her views regarding a woman's role in promoting NRN and the Nepali culture. She encouraged women to be active members of the executive committee.

204 participants were present at the conference. The formal programme commenced with the registration of these participants followed by the video snapshot of the NRN First Global Conference held in Kathmandu and a welcome speech.

ICC member Ms. Indira Ban expressed her views as to why she joined the NRN and her vision about NRN.

Christine Gee who is the Royal Nepalese Consular for NSW, ACT & SA also expressed her views regarding the success of the conference and pledged support in its future activities if necessary.

NRN Australia Ad Hoc committee coordinator Mr. Mana KC explained the stages and the activities carried out in establishing NRN Australia. He thanked all the Ad Hoc committee members, supporters, well wishers and the participants who helped directly or indirectly in establishing NRN Australia. He also mentioned about the eagerness and positive response shown by the Australian Nepali Business Community and its sponsorship of the first NRN National Conference in Australia.

NRN Ad Hoc committee member and Constitution Committee Coordinator Mr. Goba Katuwal presented the NRN Australia constitution and highlighted some major points of the constitution. The floor unanimously approved it.

Similarly NRN Ad Hoc committee member Mr. Niraj Shrestha presented the financial statement of NRN Australia as at 30 June 2005.

Another NRN Ad Hoc committee member and Web site Coordinator Mr. Shree Napit highlighted on its to date and intended use in future to play important role as a linking vehicle to all Nepali people in Australia with the rest of the nepali Diaspora in the world. He added, the extraordinary visitor number to nrn website in recent weeks simply tells people are really interested in nrn motto.

Mr. Man Bahadur Bhandari, a prominent community member, called for broader participation of members and his words of wisdom was that NRN should strengthen the united voice to achieve our objectives for Nepalis around the world.

Dr. Narayan Pradhan another prominent community member expressed his opinion about the future of NRN. He was deeply concerned about the peace in Nepal and requested NRN to play an important role in pressurising the related authorities and parties in achieving a peaceful resolution for the country.

President of GNC Mr. Bholu B Rai made everyone alert that every sweet dream needs equal amount of effort. His emphasize was to break down the nrn objectives into measurable goals with workable strategies, "It is easy to dream but we should not forget about our focus on what needs to be done to make that happen". He recalled the famous quote of the Late King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, that is, "less talk more work". This is indeed relevant for our purpose and objective. He pledged his full support in this move and called the ICC to keep track of the original focus.

Nepalese Australian Welfare Society (NAWS) President Mr. Anil Basnet pledged his strong active support for the NRN objectives and its activities.

Mr. Chandra Yonzon, a successful businessman and a representative from Nepalese Association of Victoria expressed his overwhelming response in attending the conference. He and his Victorian NRN community comprising of more than 2,000 active NRN supporters also pledged an active support for NRN Australia and its activities. He expressed the Victorians' desire to host the next conference in Melbourne.

ACT Canberra representative Dr. Krishna Hamal expressed his views regarding NRN Australia and pledged an active support from the ACT NRN community.

Queensland representative Dr. Ashok Shrestha also expressed his views regarding NRN Australia and pledged an active support of more than 200 Queensland NRN community supporters, majority of which are professionals including many years of industry and life experience.

South Australia representative and entrepreneur Mr. Deepak Bista expressed his views regarding NRN Australia and he mentioned that he and SA NRN community would also strongly support the NRN activities. He further emphasized his commitment to promote NRN Australia in SA.

Surendra Sigdel expressed his concern relating to the NRN activities such as gifts and donations. ICC coordinator Mr Bhim Udas clarified the issue. Mr Sigdel also encouraged all Nepalis from around the world to unite under this "by Nepali for Nepali" motto and work towards achieving the goal that could be a win- win for Nepal and Nepalis within and outside the country.

The program was hosted by Mrs. Ranju Thapa, followed by Mr. Bibek Thapa and then handed over to the election committee.

The election committee coordinator Mr. Bawani Oli explained the rules, regulations and the election procedures. He proposed the committee views regarding the election, which were approved by the floor:

The election committee announced the following positions were elected unanimously:

Treasurer
Joint National Coordinator

After the floor discussions among all participants, the following positions were also announced unanimously:

President
National Coordinator

The election was held for Vice President and executive committee members due to an expressed interest to participate in EC by more than the required number by constitution.

The newly elected NRN Executive Committee is comprised of as follows:

President	Mr. Mana KC
Vice President	Mrs. Ranju Thapa
Vice President	Reserved for a Victoria member - TBA
National Coordinator	Mr. Goba Katuwal
Treasurer	Mr. Shyam Kharti
Joint Coordinator	Mr. Niraj Shrestha
(1) Member	Mr. Pradip Dhakal

(2) Member	Mrs.Renu Ghimire
(3) Member	Mrs.Durga Bastola
(4) Member	Mrs. Bina Poudel
(5) Member	Reserved for an ACT member - TBA
(6) Member	Reserved for a Victoria member - TBA
(7) Member	Reserved for a Victoria member - TBA
(8) Member	Reserved for Queensland member - TBA
(9) Member	Reserved for South Australia member - TBA
(10) Member	Reserved for Western Australia member -TBA
(11) Member	Reserved for NT member - TBA
(12) Member	Reserved for Tasmania member - TBA
(13) Member	Pabi Raj Subba – Nominated
(14) Member	to be nominated by President
(15) Member	to be nominated by President

In addition to above members, all registered Nepali Associations in Australia are honoured as patrons of NRN Australia.

The NRN Australia may from time to time decide to appoint people of high stature or those with a long and/or outstanding record of contributions to the development of the Nepali community or any other person deemed deserving by the executive committee as patrons, honorary members and advisers of NRN Australia. Advisers shall be invited to attend the executive committee meetings and express their opinions and offer advice but shall not have any voting rights. Consultation to finalise the advisory board is in progress...

Newly elected committee president Mr. Mana KC thanked all the participants and the members. He indicated the early activities NRN Australia would launch including the publication of NRN Newsletter, NRN publicity campaign and the updated NRN database in Australia. He also encouraged and emphasised the promotion of NRN network in Australia and the active Australian participation in the forthcoming Second Global Conference in Kathmandu Nepal.

ICC member Mr. Sudeep Karki thanked all the participants for their contribution and valuable time .He also concluded the conference.

A number of participants won great door prizes drawn out of the barrel. A special thanks goes to "Himalayan Char Grill" and "House of Kathmandu" for providing these prizes. Rest of the sponsors are listed in NRN Australia web site.

Dinner was served followed by a night of entertainment filled with music, fun and enjoyment.

The event brought Nepalese from around Australia together. It reinforced the constructive relationship and networking forged at the first conference between distant groups in Australia. These are the people amongst achievers in Australia; share a common dream of a peaceful and prosperous Nepali community and eager to be a part of our community development.

Working together we can make a difference! "United we stand Divided we Fall"

"Be Part of an Australian Nepali family"

Thanks to all the supporters for making this conference GRAND SUCCESS!!

Reported by:

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For further details, please visit www.nrn.org.au