

Infected people stay in quarantine centres in lack of isolation ward

Twenty-five people in Godaita Municipality, Sarlahi, have tested positive for Covid-19.



Over 130 people who recently returned from India are staying in various quarantine facilities of the municipality.

OMPRAKASH THAKUR
SARLAHI, MAY 23

As many as 12 people infected with Covid-19 in Godaita Municipality, Sarlahi, are staying in various local quarantine facilities due to the lack of an isolation ward in the district. The Health Ministry on Saturday morning confirmed 13 positive cases in Sarlahi—12 from Godaita and one from Kabilashi Municipality—taking the tally in the district to 33. Even after the official confirmation, the 12 infected people in Godaita are still staying in quarantine facilities, as the district does not have an isolation ward. Isolation wards in the Provincial

Hospital in Janakpur and the Narayani Sub-regional Hospital and Gandak Hospital in Birgunj do not have any beds left to accommodate the increasing number of positive cases in Province 2. "We are compelled to keep the infected people in quarantine facilities, as the coronavirus-specific hospitals in Janakpur and Birgunj refused to admit them citing lack of beds," said Devendra Yadav, the mayor of Godaita Municipality. Thirteen people of the local unit had tested positive for the virus on Friday. According to Yadav, all the infected people are recent returnees from India. With a surge in the number of posi-

tive cases in Sarlahi, the district administration is preparing to set up an isolation ward in Malangwa, the district headquarters, to house the infected. "We have started work to set up an isolation ward in a nursing campus at Ward No 2 in Malangwa. We will shift the infected people there once the work is completed," said Chief District Officer Mohan Bahadur GC. He added that the infected people must be shifted in the isolation ward by the end of this week. Twenty-five people in Godaita Municipality have tested positive for the disease so far, and polymerase chain reaction tests of many others staying in various quarantine facilities are yet to be conducted. Yadav said. Over 130 people who recently returned from India are staying in various quarantine facilities in the municipality. Health workers on Tuesday collected the throat swabs of 81 people in Godaita and five in Ramnagar Rural Municipality, and sent them to Kathmandu for PCR tests. "Twenty-five people of Godaita and one from Ramnagar have tested positive for the virus while reports of other swabs are yet to come," said GC. The man from Kabilashi Municipality who tested positive on Saturday morning had also returned from Mumbai, India, a few days ago. He had returned home along with 40 other people. "All the people who returned with the infected man and their families have been kept in quarantine facilities," said Dipal Raya, ward chairman of Kabilashi Ward No 1.

Rukum town stops providing meals for those in quarantine

HARI GAUTAM
RUKUM (WEST), MAY 23

Chaurjahari Municipality in Rukum (West), which has 14 quarantine facilities for suspected Covid-19 patients, has stopped providing food to people living in these facilities, and has decided to hand out cash instead. The decision was taken after the number of quarantined increased steadily, and the local government didn't have money to feed everyone every day. Mayor Bishal Sharma said that the town hasn't received an adequate budget from the central and the provincial governments. "We expect the number to swell in the next few days. We cannot provide three meals a day to everyone." Until Tuesday, the municipality had been providing breakfast, lunch, and dinner for 39 individuals staying at its 14 facilities. On May 19, a meeting of the municipal-level disaster management committee decided to hand out Rs 178 to everyone in quarantine, instead of food. On Friday alone 34 people returned to the municipality from various Indian cities. All have been sent to quarantine at their respective wards. A directive issued by the federal government states that local governments must provide food for those in quarantine or give them food allowance equivalent to the rate fixed for the security personnel under the District Police Office. But the cash allowance is not enough to pay for four meals a day, say those at the facilities. Yubak BK, a man from Chaurjahari Ward No. 10, who has been staying at the quarantine facility in Ward No. 2, said, "Rs 178 is not sufficient to buy breakfast, lunch and dinner. Instead of giving us money, the municipality should make better arrangements for us." Purna Chaudhary, another resident of Ward No. 1, has been staying at the quarantine facility in his ward for the last six days. "It will be difficult for us to pay for food with the cash provided by the municipality." According to the municipal office, individuals who enter Chaurjahari (from India and other districts) need to stay in quarantine for 14 days. According to Ram Bahadur KC, acting chief administrative officer of the municipality, the town provides sanitisers, soaps, drinking water, and other necessary materials to those staying in quarantine.

Madhes parties press ...

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Now, since the government is pushing for an amendment, the two parties say it could be a good time to include their amendment demands as well. The Oli government is unlikely to meet with any opposition in its constitution amendment proposal to update the new political map. As per the constitution, a constitutional amendment bill needs to be endorsed by a two-thirds majority in both the Houses. The ruling party falls around 10 votes short in the House of Representatives, but still it is likely to get through as even the opposition parties are with the government on the map issue. In the National Assembly, the ruling party commands the required number. The government's decision to publish the new political map by including territories that India has long occupied has united politicians across the spectrum, but there are some who believe that Oli made the move to address his domestic constituency. Amid rising criticism for his poor handling of the Covid-19 crisis, Oli had come under immense pressure from his party members to step down. Oli's decision to publish the map, which has been dubbed by many as a bold move, has not only quelled criticism but also won over the opposition. Janata Samajbadi Party leader Bhattarai, who is also a former prime minister, said that there is nothing to dispute on an issue of national interest. "Our point is that the ruling party has a good opportunity to build trust among all the parties," Bhattarai told the Post. "The onus lies on the government and the prime minister to create an environment for trust-building." According to Bhattarai, national unity among the parties is the need of the hour. "We can form a common understanding on all issues, including those raised by the Madhesis, Janajatis and Tharus," said Bhattarai. Bhattarai said that they had urged Deuba to take the lead, as it was during his prime ministership in 2016 that an amendment bill was tabled to address the demands of the Madhes-based parties. The bill, however, was blocked by then CPN-UML, led by Oli. In August 2017, the bill failed in Parliament, as it did not get the required number of votes. In the then 592-strong Parliament, 395 votes were required to amend the constitution. But of the 553 members present in the meeting, 347 voted in favour, while 206 voted against. "Our proposal was that Deuba, as the leader of the main opposition, should take the lead in creating an environment for national unity to resolve all outstanding issues, national and international," said Bhattarai.

Keshav Acharya: If we can achieve four percent growth and maintain inflation ...

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A local government in Gulmi is encouraging people to engage in farming during the lockdown by offering cash subsidies for every ropani of cultivated land. We will need agricultural tools worth billions of rupees, but migrant workers are unlikely to invest in these tools. Is the government ready to help? The government needs to ensure agricultural input, along with a market for products and access to roads and electricity. For this, the agriculture budget needs to be substantially increased. Another area where employment can be generated is in river embankment projects. Instead of employing engineers, local governments can participate in building embankments. Jobs can also be created in building infrastructure like roads, electricity distribution networks, water pipelines, telephone wires and sewage facilities. They should be developed under a single package. This could create a large number of jobs, possibly 300,000-400,000, at the local and provincial levels.



Keshav Acharya

With the Covid-19 pandemic, the future of labour migration is at risk. Nepal depends heavily on remittance, not just for consumption but also for foreign exchange reserves. With tourism, another major source of foreign exchange, also drying up, how will Nepal, a country that depends heavily on imports, fare?

The country's foreign exchange earnings from remittance, exports, tourism and foreign aid are all going to be affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. I had thought that there might be more aid from multilateral donors but I am no longer confident that their support will grow substantially as there is now more competition for their resources.

Given this context, the government needs to re-prioritise the use of foreign exchange. The focus should be on procuring medical supplies, food items and capital goods. If there is extreme pressure, the government needs to be ready to impose a quota on the availability of foreign exchange.

Given the possibility of decreased foreign aid and low growth in revenue, there is a call to decrease the size of the budget. What is your suggestion?

I used to advocate big budgets and big infrastructure projects. But our capacity for expenditure is very limited. The Parliamentary Finance Committee has asked the government to introduce a budget of Rs1.7 trillion, but I don't believe the government will be able to spend that amount either. As we will not be working well until Tihar, we should not go for an ambitious budget. If we can achieve four percent growth next year and maintain inflation at seven percent, I will be happy.

Remittance has been key to alleviating poverty in rural Nepal. As remittance shrinks, what can be done for vulnerable communities in the new budget?

The government says that 18 percent of the population is below the poverty line. Due to the lockdown in the last two months, I predict that the population has now increased to 20-21 percent, as many people have lost jobs in the last two months. In order to help them, the government must remodel the Prime Minister's Employment Programme in line with India's Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Programme, which is a very transparent programme.

The Covid-19 pandemic has shown the importance of local and provincial governments. Should resources for provincial and local governments be increased?

My recommendation is that provincial governments be allowed to implement any projects below Rs5 billion and local governments be allowed to implement projects below Rs1 billion. The budget should be allocated accordingly. At the same time, the spending capacity of provincial and local governments should also be strengthened because they don't have technical knowhow regarding feasibility study and project appraisals, for which the federal government can send technical staff or assign retired bureaucrats.

The country has been on lockdown for the last two months but the government has yet to come out with a proper plan to lift or ease restrictions. What do you recommend?

Despite the lockdown, we will have to bring production into operation, along with distribution channels for goods that help in import substitution and promote exports. For this, proper health protocols should be in place. If the government does not believe in the private sector's distribution channels, the army or police can run these services. The security agencies can deliver raw materials to the factories and help bring finished products to the market. We should not suspend all economic activities completely.

The private sector is not happy with the policies and programmes, saying that it lacks measures to help them. What can the government do to help the private sector at a time when the government itself is facing a resource crunch?

I am sympathetic to the private sector. The government seeks to recover taxes in whatever way possible but when the private sector is facing hardship, the government is hesitant. Due to the limitation of resources, the government may not be able to help the private sector with cash, but it can extend the tax payment deadline, provide interest subsidies and guarantee bank loans through the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation.

Currently, corporate income tax for banks is 30 percent and 25 percent for other sectors. India has already decreased corporate tax to 20 percent. As we are trying to attract foreign direct investment, we need a more favourable tax regime and better infrastructure than India, which also has access to the sea. The government can reduce corporate tax to 22 percent.

C. I. I. C. Nepal Pvt. Ltd.
Urgently Required
Preference shall be given to Nepalese Citizen For the post of Vice Manager/ Director of Chinese visa policy
Number of Person: 1
Qualification Required:
Bachelor's Degree in Management (or equivalent)
Very fluent in English (Writing, Listening & Speaking)
Very fluent in Chinese (Writing, Listening & Speaking)
Experience: Two years in Management Position
Nature of Work:
Guide, inspect and training staff in terms of Chinese visa policy and report to Chinese Embassy.
Selection Procedure:
Only shortlisted candidates shall be called interview. Interview shall be taken by Manager. Any interested candidates can send their Resume and cover letter on zhangjiyong.biz@cici.com.cn.
Salary: Negotiable
Deadline of Submission of Application: May 29, 2020

CHAUTARA SANGCHOKGADHI MUNICIPALITY
Office Of The Municipal Executive
Chautara, Sindhupalchok
INVITATION FOR ELECTRONIC BIDS
Invitation for Bids for the Construction of Stone Masonry Works In Sahid Smriti Playground, Narsingdada, CSGM-13
Contract Identification No : CSGM/NCB/WORKS-42/076-77
Date of publication : 2077/02/11 (24th May 2020)
1. The Chautara Sangachokgadhi Municipality Office, Chautara, Sindhupalchok invites electronic bids from the Eligible Bidders for construction of the following works under NCB Procedures.

| Contract Identification No | Description | Estimated Amount (Without VAT) | Bid Security Amount | Price of Bid Document | Bid Submission Last Date, Time | Bid Opening Date, Time |
|----------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--|--|
| CSGM/NCB/WORKS-42/076-77 | Stone Masonry Works In Sahid Smriti Playground, Narsingdada, CSGM-13 | 4871608.32 | 137,700.00 | Rs.3,000 | 2077/03/09 (23 rd June 2020) at 12:00 hrs | 2077/03/09 (23 rd June 2020) at 13:00 hrs |

2. Interested Eligible Bidders may obtain further information at the office of Chautara Sangachokgadhi Municipality, Office of the Municipal Executive, Chautara, Sindhupalchok, Contact no 011-6204777 or may visit the website <http://www.chautaramun.gov.np> or may visit PPMO website www.bolpatra.gov.np / egp.gov.np.
3. Bidder who chooses to submit their bid electronically may download the bidding documents for e-submission from PPMO's Web Site www.bolpatra.gov.np / egp.gov.np. Bidders, submitting their bid electronically, should deposit the cost (as specified above) of bidding document in the office account no. as specified below and the scanned copy (pdf format) of the Bank deposit voucher shall be uploaded by the bidder at the time of electronic submission of the bids. Information to deposit the cost of bidding document in Bank:
Name of the Bank : Nepal Bank Limited, Chautara Branch
Name of Office : Chautara Sangachokgadhi Municipality
Account Number (Aantarik Rajashwo Khata for bid document fee) : 05703000001001000001
Dharauni Khata No. : 05703000003000000001
Office Code No : 23-365-14
4. Electronic bids must be submitted through PPMO website www.bolpatra.gov.np / egp.gov.np on or before as mentioned above.
5. Bids must be valid for a period of 90 days after bid opening and must be accompanied by a scanned copy of the bid security in pdf format amounting to a minimum of NRs. 137,700.00 which shall be valid for 30 days beyond the validity period of the bid.
6. Bids shall be opened in the presence of Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at above mentioned date and time at the office of Chautara Sangachokgadhi Municipality.
7. If the last date of purchasing, submission and opening falls on a government holiday then the next working day shall be considered the last day. In such case the validity period of the bid security shall remain the same as specified for the original last date of bid submission.
8. Bidders are advised to visit the site and assess the actual site conditions prior to submit the bid in their own cost.
9. The Employer reserves the right to accept or reject, wholly or partly any or all the Bids without assigning any reason, whatsoever.
10. Any matter not covered by this notice shall be as per other mandatory information as per PPA and PPR. (With all amendment) of GON.
11. If there are any changes or correction in notice or on Bid document, the notice will be published in Chautara Sangachokgadhi Municipality notice board and in bid addendum.
Chief Administrative Officer
Chautara Sangachokgadhi Municipality