

# BRANNGO NEWSLETTER



## UK promises help to Nepal graduate to developing country

The United Kingdom has assured the government of Nepal that it would continue helping Nepal graduate to the status of a developing country.

In a meeting with Health and Population Minister Padam Giri on Friday, the British Ambassador to Nepal Nicola Pollitt said the British government would bring new programmes to Nepal to help Nepal achieve the developing country graduation target by the deadline of 2026.

She also said her government would also fund the retrofitting of Bhaktapur Hospital and Paschimanchal Hospital.

During the meeting, Health Minister Giri thanked the ambassador for the support Nepal received during the time of the Covid pandemic.

He also expected support from the British government for the implementation of the Nepal Health Sector Strategic Plan.

Read more: <https://english.onlinekhabar.com/uk-help-nepal-into-developing-country.html#:~:text=In%20a%20meeting%20with%20Health,bv%20th>



### Head of USAID Samantha Power visits Nepal



Samantha Power, the chief of the United States international cooperation agency USAID, arrived in Kathmandu on Tuesday, February 7, morning on an official visit.

The visit is taking place just a week after the brief Nepal visit of Victoria Nuland, the United States undersecretary of state for political affairs.

As she holds a cabinet status and National Security Council membership in the Joe Biden administration, officials say Power is the senior-most official to visit Nepal after the US State Secretary Colin Powell, who was in Nepal in 2002.

After landing at the Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu this morning, the USAID chief went to Adarsha Secondary School in Bhaktapur and interacted with students.

Samantha Power is scheduled to meet Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal, Deputy Prime Minister Bishnu Paudel, Foreign Affairs Minister Bimala Rai Paudyal, civil society leaders and some businesspersons before leaving Nepal tomorrow.

In recent years, the frequency of visits of diplomats from the US is continuously rising, which for some is a hint of a shift in Nepal's foreign relations priorities as well as the growing geopolitical importance of Nepal in the international community.

Read more: <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/feb-08-2023-administrator-samantha-power-continues-her-visit-nepal#:~:text=Administrator%20Power%20Travels%20to%20Nepal&text=During%20her%20vi sit%20to%20Nepal,%2C%20inclusive%2C%20and%20resilient%20country.>

## British State Minister Trevelyan pays courtesy call on PM Dahal



Anne-Marie Trevelyan, the Indo-Pacific minister of state at the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, held a meeting with Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal on Friday March 10.

In a tweet, the Prime Minister's Office says the two discussed various matters related to bilateral cooperation.

During her visit to Nepal, Trevelyan also visited Dharan and met veterans and families of the Gurkha soldiers.

British Ambassador Nicola Pollitt shares in her tweet that the embassy also showed her some of Nepal's cultural and religious heritage.

## As season of forest fires starts, authorities alert public to risks

At least 30 persons have died in fire-related incidents since the start of 2023.



On Friday, two children aged four and five years were killed in a house fire in Hilihang Rural Municipality-7 of Panchthar district. Parents of the victims had reportedly gone to their farms at the time the fire broke out.

Fourteen houses were engulfed in a fire in Terhathum the same day.

Nepal Army medevaced two fire victims—one 19 and another 21 years old—on Saturday to Kathmandu from Surkhet. Around 80 percent of the body of one of the victims had been burnt and 36 percent of another, according to media reports.

Fire incidents in Nepal have been on the rise. Wildfires usually start from March in Nepal, when farmers burn the remains of crops on the fields and the threat keeps growing until April-May, depending on precipitation. Thousands of incidents of fire are witnessed throughout the country during that time and not all of them go into government records.

Meanwhile, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority has sent four portable water pumps to local governments and is preparing to distribute 14 additional pumps. Those pumps can draw water from 1,500 metres depth and pump it 300 metres away.

Read more: <https://kathmandupost.com/climate-environment/2023/02/26/as-season-of-forest-fires-starts-authorities-alert-public-to-risks>

## Thousands of women skip routine maternity services



Around 140,000 Nepali women give birth at home, around 210,000 do not make postnatal visits and 45,000 don't receive antenatal care, report says.

However, officials at the Ministry of Health and Population said that they are still unaware of the identity and whereabouts of those women that are deprived of routine maternity services.

The nationwide study carried out between January 5 and June 22 last year with technical and financial support from the United States Agency for International Development shows that only 70.2 percent women received a postnatal check during the first two days after birth. It is estimated that around 700,000 women get pregnant every year throughout the country.

The figure was 57 percent in 2016. The report also shows that 94.3 percent women received antenatal care, meaning that around six percent or 45,000 women did not receive the service. The figure was 84 percent in 2016.

Read more: <https://kathmandupost.com/health/2023/02/22/thousands-of-women-skip-routine-maternity-services>

## **Pfizer's bivalent Covid-19 vaccine arrives**

On February 13 the first batch of Pfizer's bivalent Covid-19 vaccine has arrived in Kathmandu.

The new vaccine will help fight the omicron variant and will be used as booster shots throughout the country.

In the first phase, 345,000 bivalent vaccines were brought to Kathmandu on Monday morning. The vaccine will be stored in Teku and will be sent to all provinces as needed in a few days, according to the Department of Health Services.

According to Surendra Chaurasia, Head of the Supply Management Branch of the Department of Health Services, the government of Nepal requested the bivalent vaccine through COVAX.

A total 1.5 million doses of the Bivalent vaccine will be provided to Nepal under the COVAX facility in four phases.

## Germany supports Nepal with 1.5 million Covid-19 vaccines through COVAX



Germany handed over more than 1.5 million doses of Pfizer-BioNTech's bivalent Covid-19 vaccine to Nepal through the COVAX initiative.

German Ambassador to Nepal, Thomas Prinz, gave the vaccines to the [Minister for Health and Population](#) Padam Giri at the Ministry on Wednesday. Present with Prinz were UNICEF Representative to Nepal Elke Wisch and WHO Representative to

Nepal Rajesh Sambhajirao Pandav.

“From the beginning of this pandemic, Germany has supported the people of Nepal and has advocated for multilateral solutions like COVAX and ACT-Accelerator. Vaccines are key in the fight against this pandemic and I am delighted to hand over today's vaccines that were invented in Germany,” said Prinz, adding Germany had supported Nepal with 5.6 million doses of vaccines so far

Although the number of Covid infections in Nepal is relatively low at present, experts remain concerned about potential new surges in the days to come. So far, over 82 per cent of the total population has been vaccinated, with around 9,08 million having received booster shots.

Read more: <https://english.onlinekhabar.com/germany-nepal-million-covid-19-vaccine-covax.html>