

NELTA Conference Phase II, Chitwan Highlights

22 February 2012

Inauguration Session

The 17th International Conference of Nepal English Language Teachers' Association (NELTA) Phase II was held on 22-23 February, 2012 at Small Heaven Higher Secondary School, Kalyanpur, Chitwan.

Master of the Ceremony (MC) Mr. Eka Dev Adhikari, Secretary, NELTA Chitwan Branch opened the session welcoming the Chief Guest, Mr Kishore Thapa, Secretary of Ministry of Education, Nepal, all the national and international dignitaries, representatives from the US Embassy, British Council, media people and all the participants, presenters from home and abroad. Mr. Batuk Lal Tamang, Chair of NELTA Chitwan chaired the inaugural ceremony. Chief Guest Mr. Kishore Thapa, Secretary, Ministry of Education, Prof. Dr. Tirth Raj Khaniya, Founding President of NELTA, former Member of National Planning Commission and Chair of Subject Committee, Faculty of Education, Department of English Education, TU, Mr Hemanta Raj Dahal, President of NELTA, Mr Kamal Poudel, General Secretary of NELTA, Mr. Shanti Ram Timilsina, Principal of Small Heaven Higher Secondary English School, Kalyanpur, Chitwan, Key Speaker Prof. Fredricka L. Stoller, Northern Arizona University, USA, Prof. Angi Malderez, UK, Mr. Fife Macduff, Regional English Language Fellow (RELO), US Embassy, Kathmandu, Dr. Barbara Law, English Language Fellow, US, Mr. Ramakanta Sharma, District Education Officer, Chitwan, Mr. Ganga Gautam, past President, NELTA, Central Executive Members, Mr. Bhairab Raj Regmi, Founder Chair of NELTA Chitwan, Advisor to NELTA Chitwan, Mr. Devendra Prasad Upadhyaya, educationist and social worker, Mr. Dinanath Panthi, Programme Co-ordinator, Educational Training Centre (ETC) Chitwan, Mr. Ishwar Kandel, Vice Chair, NELTA Chitwan, Mr. Tika Ram Regmi, Immediate Past Chair, NELTA Chitwan, Mr. Bel Bahadur Gurung, Chair, PABSON Chitwan, Mr Damodar Regmi, Section Officer of Department of Education, Sanathimi, graced the seats on the dais.

Then **Mr. Adhikari** gave short introduction about NELTA, about its vision and mission. **Mr. Issori Prasad Sapkota**, Jt. Secretary NELTA Chitwan distributed Badges to the guests.

Mr. Shanti Ram Timalsina, Principal of Small Heaven School, cordially welcomed the guests, the presenters and the participants and said that it was really a great opportunity for Small Heaven English School Chitwan to welcome all the guests in the premises and wished them all the great success of the conference. He said that he was happy to welcome all the distinguished guests from Nepal and abroad and wished that they would feel at home.

Mr Kishore Thapa, Secretary of Ministry of Education, Nepal, inaugurated the Conference Phase II of the 17th international conference lighting the candle as a Chief Guest. Delivering his



inaugural speech, he congratulated Nepal English Language Teachers' Association (NELTA) for

organizing the 17th International Conference for national and international English Language Teaching (ELT) professionals. He further added that NELTA has proved to be a forum for more than 5000 English language teachers, trainers, researchers, students and scholars. He expressed,

‘I appreciate NELTA’s contribution to enhancing quality of English Language Teaching in Nepal. Ministry of Education has been working very closely with NELTA and, through our collaboration, significant achievements have been made in teacher training, curriculum development, examination reforms, research and development in English language teaching and learning.

The Conference Theme *Beyond Binaries: Sharing ELT Practices and Creating the Future* is extremely relevant to the current context of Nepal. The expertise of key speakers from the UK and USA proved rewarding to the conference participants as well as the papers presented in the conference provided opportunities for in-depth understanding of the ELT issues in Nepal.



The number of participants in the NELTA conference organized in Kathmandu and Chitwan shows the growing interest of the stakeholders and ELT professionals in English language teaching. NELTA Conference has offered opportunities for sharing experiences with national and international experts and learning from each other’s experiences. It has also provided a forum for exchanging ideas at national, regional and international levels and has contributed to fostering professionalism in ELT.

Despite our efforts, the underlying reality is that English has remained as a hurdle for students in schools and university campuses. The challenge for us is how we improve teaching and learning of English in schools and colleges, and how we make ELT pedagogies more meaningful to our students.

The role of NELTA is crucial for providing technical and professional support for enhancing quality of English language teaching in Nepal. I highly appreciate

the collaboration of national organizations, schools, colleges, publishers, the British Council, US agency and the Indian Embassy for joining hands in convening this conference.

We have great admiration the outcomes of the conference. Ministry of Education looks forward to utilizing the knowledge generated through this forum.

I highly appreciate this opportunity. I wish you all a success.’



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Likewise, **Professor Tith Raj Khaniya** expressed that NELTA has been offering a lot but yet to do more. The international conference in two places has aroused such a great interest to participate in the conference as a special event. He appreciated NELTA for playing effective role to connect it with the international communities.

Prof Khaniya revealed that the Secretary of Ministry of Education, who has become the Chief Guest of the inaugural ceremony, in Chitwan, has strong academic background. His presence in NELTA as a Chief Guest will allow us to work with him. Prof Khaniya also reiterated his discussion with Prof Rod Ellis, to look into the possibility to collaborate in the ELT with NELTA. He requested the Secretary to note the publications of NELTA. We want to prove through the evidence – what NELTA has been doing. One of the key evidences is the presence of Prof Rod Ellis, who is the world class academic and has carried out tremendous research in task based in ELT.

Prof Khaniya said NELTA would need the support of the Secretary. Ministry of Education has already introduced a policy of introducing English from grade I, but what happens while doing so without preparing human resources. Government should be very serious to implement it. Moreover, he also emphasized on the need of collaboration with the international agencies to develop new methods to make our teaching with new techniques.

Highlighting another issue, Prof Khaniya said that NELTA is born as a non-political organization that we thought in the beginning; the moment we start playing a game, it will create a problem. However, it does not mean that NELTA will do that. The moment I join NELTA, I should be non-political. NELTA is a culture. The challenge of these days is people's inability to distinguish political and non-political arena. Many orgs disappeared, but we have been able to invite the attention of the international community, chiefly, British Council, the US State Department and now with the Indian Embassy as well. NELTA has played important role to maintain such relationship.

Mr. Batuk Lal Tamang stated, 'We are here because NELTA is here and NELTA is here because we are here'. NELTA is the name of a network, so he urged, it is required that all the ELT professionals and practitioners join NELTA to make the networking of ELT stronger. He said that since the conception of NELTA Chitwan branch, the NELTA activists of Chitwan branch had a dream to organize the International Conference at least once. Now it is going to be true. He added that the step of organizing the International Conference in Chitwan was a milestone for the branch. He urged other branches to be the strong part of such great networking and to experience such opportunity and challenges of professional development. He claimed that the program was not the end of the local activities, but the beginning. He requested RELO of American Embassy Mr. Fife MacDuff and NELTA Central Committee President Mr. Hemanta Raj Dahal to provide any kind remarkable ELT programs for Chitwan. NELTA Chitwan activists were ready to accomplish all kinds of duties required. He expressed his sincere gratitude to the NELTA Central Committee who entrusted them and gave the chance to organize the great program. He thanked all the supporters, well-wishers, distinguished guests, presenters, participants and journalists for their kind and encouraging co-operation.

Mr. Bel Bahadur Gurung, Chair, PABSON Chitwan, expressed that it was a great opportunity for the people from Chitwan to organize such an important event. He said that such programmes are always important to enhance the teachers' skills in teaching along with the learning skills of the students. The development of English is required to develop the academic status in the modern world, he added.

Similarly, **Mr Devendra Prasad Upadhyaya**, a senior teacher, expressed his pleasure to be among the teachers and NELTA members who have been working for the professional development. He said that the perfection in second language is always an ongoing activity and such type of conferences are instrumental in widening the horizon of teaching and thus make the teaching-learning task a real success.

Likewise, **Mr. Ramakanta Sharma**, DEO Chitwan, congratulated the Chitwan NELTA branch for being successful to bring the conference to Chitwan. He added if the quality of teaching is enhanced, the students do not need to go out seeking better education. He hoped that NELTA would be able to help materialize this mission. Mr Sharma expected that the teachers would concentrate on their skill development. He assured the NELTA members that they are pleased to work in collaboration to develop the professionalism in the field of teaching.

Mr Kamal Poudel, General Secretary of NELTA, expressed his pleasure to be the part of the Conference in Chitwan where he was educated. He recalled his past when he was educated in the schools and college in Chitwan, and added that the teachers in all ages strive their best to make their teaching a good task. He further said that the ELT has now undergone a lot of changes and the teaching needs to be considered accordingly. The teachers in the modern age need to address the learner centred teaching applying the appropriate strategies which ensure the development of language skills. The appropriate way of teaching will always learners acquire the foreign language, he added.

Addressing the participants in the Conference Phase II, **Mr Hemanta Raj Dahal**, NELTA President, expressed that this has been a very exciting moment to see overwhelming participation of the ELT professionals in the 17th international conference of NELTA, in Chitwan. This is a solemn and most momentous occasion.

We are able to grow with your meticulous work that you have been volunteering despite the fact that you are coping with the deficit of physical and financial resources, as well as the deficit of political commitment for education including policy and implementation. Our pride is our professionalism that though a human being carries political ideologies, nobody brings politics inside NELTA.

Moreover, the proposed ELT survey, we believe, will be invaluable to provide ELT policy input to Ministry of Education and National Planning Commission, so that Government of Nepal shall have solid foundation of literature to decide the role and impact of English language teaching in New Federal Republic of Nepal.

We have witnessed rapid growth of NELTA with more than 5000 members, 34 branches that cover almost 50 districts in the country ranging from the far east to the far west. NELTA is also the affiliate member to the TESOL and IATEFL.

In Chitwan, there are 2 key and 2 plenary speeches, and 68 papers from 10 countries covering USA, UK, Nepal, Afghanistan, Singapore, India, Japan, South Africa, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. These deliberations address various issues of teaching English through sharing experiences and presenting findings from research projects. The highlights of this conference are the two globally recognized key speakers. Professor Fredricka L. Stoller, Northern Arizona University, USA, and Angi Malderez, an Honorary Senior Fellow of the School of Education, the University of Leeds, UK and the leading figure in teacher mentoring.

We hope this conference will provide a fruitful avenue to the teachers of English in Nepal to learn through sharing and to connect them globally.

On this occasion, NELTA would like to express its sincere gratitude the Ministry of Education, particularly Mr Kishore Thapa, who should be the SLC Board topper, in 2031, for accepting our request to inaugurate the 17th international conference in Chitwan, to British Council Nepal, the US Embassy and Oxford University Press for sponsoring the leading professors as the key speakers of the conference. Similarly, we would also like to thank Cambridge University Press and Routledge Publications for their support with the publication of NELTA Journal and conference proceedings. We extend our thanks to the Indian Embassy for helping us with the cost of the publication of the conference newsletter and program

booklet and the speakers from India. Thanks are due to all other sponsors such as EKTA Books, CG Chaudhary Group and the organizations and individuals who supported to make this event happen.

I would like to acknowledge the support of Prof Fredricka Stoller and Angi Malderez, the key speakers who have kindly accepted our request. All the presenters and participants deserve our sincere gratitude without whom this conference would not have been a success.

Small Heaven School Family, Kalyanpur, Chitwan and its staff deserve our special thanks for hosting this mega ELT event. Without their support, this conference would not have been possible. I would like to convey our special thanks to Umesh Shrestha sir who always accepted our request for support.

Finally, I would like to reiterate that NELTA has taken an initiative to look into the possibility to have a regional set up of NELTA.'

Mr Ishwor Kandel, Vice Chair, NELTA Citwan Branch gave vote of thanks to the Chief Guest, Guest, all the presenters and participants from home and abroad, Small Heaven School, publications, supporters who have been instrumental in making the conference a success.