

NEPAL COVID SITREP as at 8 JUN 21

HEADLINES

1. The Foreign and Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) continue to be engaged in identifying Nepal's medical needs. Talks between the FCDO, Ministry of Health Nepal and Ambassador of Nepal UK continue.
2. Army Medical and Advisory Team (MAT) sent to Nepal by the UK MOD has engaged with GoN and Nepal Army senior leaders to agree the team's delivery tasks. A meeting with Directorate of Military Intelligence (DGMI) was organised to further understand the requirements in country.
3. Col Comdt, Deputy Col Comdt and HQBG staff continue to engage at appropriate levels to influence and enable the provision of the best possible support to Govt of Nepal (GoN) and Nepal Army.
4. Numerous groups in UK continue to lobby the UK Govt to send vaccines directly to Nepal. National policy remains to deliver through the COVAX initiative.
5. Nepal is to receive "a share" of the 7M Covid-19 vaccines given to 17 Asian countries by the US. This is part of the 19M vaccines donated to COVAX by the US.
6. Compassionate leave and travel to Nepal. BG personnel have re-started travel to Nepal on compassionate cases originating from the UK, using the limited number of flights approved by the GoN.

POLITICAL

7. International

- a. The UN Nepal Covid Pandemic SITREP as at 4 June 21 gives a more detailed report on the situation in various parts of Nepal. Procurement of vaccines remains a critical gap and top priority.
- b. World Health Organisation (WHO) COVAX, co-led by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI) and WHO are operating in Nepal in order to identify the priority needs and the response required.
- c. International organisations operating in Nepal are liaising with the GoN about the repatriation of their non-essential staff.

8. Nepal

- a. 4 Jun The Nepali PM called on the UK to provide their Covid vaccine stocks either directly or through Gavi's Covax facility as cases surge. BBC interview: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-57356143>
- b. The GoN has approved two flights a week to/from India and one flight to China mainly for medical supplies. Scheduled weekly flights, by a single airline, to China, Qatar and Turkey resumed from 1 Jun 21. All other international flights are suspended until 14 Jun (extended from 31 May) 21.
- c. Domestic Airlines are suspended until further notice.
- d. The GoN has given rights to each local government to impose a lockdown or take any other additional measures if COVID cases reach certain limits. The three Chief District Officers (CDOs) of Kathmandu Valley have extended the lockdown in the valley until 14 Jun 21.

e. Restrictions have been increased and opening hours for fresh food shops now limited to 0700 - 0900 hrs. No one is allowed out for any reason other than shopping or medical.

f. MedCiti Hospital in Kathmandu is now reporting availability of COVID wards, critical and non-critical wards. Occupancy is still over 90%, but this is a significant change from 5 June 21. The situation in rural areas is reported to be deteriorating.

g. The demand for oxygen remains high, but the supply is improving, and hospitals are coping. Case numbers have fallen, but the existing figures remain high and there is a possibility that rising demands for bed space may again result in closure. Treatment of non-COVID patients is not assured, but confidence is returning, and more patients are being seen.

h. COVID stats (provided by BGN).

Nepal COVID Statistics	Total Numbers
Total cases (x)	588,124
Total recovered (y)	491,001
Active (x-y)	97,123
No of tests conducted	13,733
Recovery rate	83.5%
Total death	7,898
National daily reported cases	3,479 (with most cases in Kathmandu Valley)

9. **UK**

a. Pressure brought by several Lords for a special effort for Nepal, notably from Lord Sheikh and the Earl of Sandwich, both sit on the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Nepal.

b. UK Aid essential medical supplies arrived in Nepal. UK Ambassador to Nepal (Ms Nicola Pollitt) met the aircraft at Kathmandu airport.

c. Change Org petition to Foreign Secretary launched with lots of high profile signatories: Joanna Lumley, Michael Palin, scientists, academics, Everest climbers, Gurkha veterans, including Capt Rambahadur Limbu VC, two former Col Comdts – Petition - Send Oxygen to Nepal. The petition has been rejected by the Govt because of the similar petition “Provide Emergency Support to Treat COVID Patients in Nepal” had been submitted earlier.

d. Co-Chair Britain Nepal Medical Trust (BNMT) and Chairman Britain Nepal Society (BNS) are both engaged in lobbying the UK Govt for vaccines to be sent to Nepal.

10. **FCDO**

a. Recovery of non-essential staff and dependents to UK, using the medical supplies aircraft has been accomplished. Core staff will remain in place to continue developmental work.

b. FCDO are reassessing the humanitarian situation and further support options.

11. **MOD/Army**

a. Col Comdt, Dep Col Comdt and HQBG staff engaging at appropriate levels.

b. Ongoing planning in MOD:

(1) MOD support / FCDO approved medical equipment reached Nepal on 28 May 21.

- (2) MOD staff are reviewing options to provide wider support to Nepal in line with FCDO intent.
- (3) MoD held a meeting on 28 May to discuss what else UK and MoD can do to support Nepal. The significant wish list received in early May is being revised in Kathmandu and will be discussed with the aim of preparing a Ministerial Submission. Details have yet to be promulgated.
- (4) All non-essential and at-risk service personnel/dependants have returned to the UK, bar a few who were in quarantine and unable to travel. Total c115 pax (including some of those on leave) have now arrived in UK. Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration (RSOI) process has started.
- (5) HQBG is/will be providing necessary support to BGN personnel and families who are repatriated to the UK. They will complete mandatory 10-day quarantine and move to SFA in Larkhill on 9 Jun 21.

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