



# COVID – 19 Nepal's Situation and Preparedness

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# Introduction

- ❖ Nepal observed the first case of COVID-19 in 13 January 2020
- ❖ It was an imported case and patient recovered
- ❖ Preventive measures were adopted at Airports
  - Thermal scanning for arriving passengers
  - Laser thermometer
  - Those found symptoms isolated and sent for treatment



# Existing Mechanism

- At National level
  - International Health Regulation Multi-sector Coordination Committee – Chaired by Secretary of Ministry of Health
- At Airport level
  - Airport Facilitation Committee – Chaired by General Manager of International Airport



# Formation of High Level Mechanism

- After WHO declared COVID-19 as global health emergency in 30 January 2020 and placed Nepal among high risk countries
- Government of Nepal formed a “ Corona Virus (COVID-19) Disease Infection Prevention and Control High Level Coordination Committee” chaired by Deputy Prime Minister
- COVID-19 Prevention and Control Action Team led by Chief Secretary
- COVID-19 prevention Task –force at Kathmandu Airport



# CAAN Initiatives

- CAAN issued guidelines for airport operations in accordance with the Alert 12 of Airport Emergency Plan
- CAAN issued guidelines to airline operators for precautionary measures for the safety of flight crew, passengers and other personnel based on ICAO guidelines, national guidelines and best practices adopted in international level
- CAAN issued guidelines for Air Traffic Services as per contingency plan
- CAAN extended licenses and certificates and also relaxed on flight and duty time limitation based on operational needs



# Travel restrictions

- Effective from March 10, 2020 Nepal suspended on Arrival Visa facilities for nationals of 5 countries, requirement of PCR report for visa and travel advisory to Nepali
- Effective from March 13, 2020, suspension of on Arrival Visa facilities for nationals of 8 countries
- Effective from March 14, 2020, suspension of On Arrival Visa facilities for all foreign nationals, mandatory PCR for visa, travel advisory to Nepali



# Suspension of commercial flights

- Effective from 20 March 2020, restriction of entry of passengers from 73 countries by direct flight or through transit from other countries
- Airlines operated empty inbound flights to carry outbound passengers
- Effective from 22 March 2020, Nepal imposed restriction on all international passenger flights inbound to Nepal
- Effective from 24 March 2020, Government of Nepal locked-down the country and Nepal suspended all commercial international and domestic flights except passenger evacuation, freighter, rescue and other emergency flights till 31 March 2020.
- The suspension of all commercial flight operations extended till 15 April 2020.



# Passenger Rescue and evacuation

- During this period a total of 41 rescue flights were carried out by aeroplane and helicopters to bring 682 foreign nationals from different parts of the country to capital Kathmandu.
- 3 Repatriation flights carried out 909 foreigners and still more such flights are being carried out to evacuate stranded foreigners in Nepal.





# Conclusion

- ICAO had advised States to follow WHO guidelines to prevent COVID-19. WHO advised States that travel restriction is not a solution rather it will make the situation worse. However, the epidemic spread all over the world very fast and turned as pandemic.
- States imposed strict measures like travel restrictions and flight banning.
- ICAO and WHO should review the recommendation and guidance made so far to the States in the context of COVID-19.
- ICAO also consider to review if the existing provision of Annex-9 is adequate to address this kind of situation or Need of a dedicated Annex for protection of public health from this kind of epidemic.



*Thank you*