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**A Study of Inter-Agencies Cooperation in Border Governance of Nepal**

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**Abstract**

*Coordinated border management (CBM) refers to a coordinated approach by border agencies, both domestic and international for achieving efficiencies by facilitating trade and travel flows, with maintaining a balance with compliance requirements. The core objective of this paper is to identify governmental agencies cooperation for border governance of Nepal. For the purpose of understanding inter agency cooperation the research uses both qualitative and quantitative approach with descriptive design using both primary and secondary data. The findings show that there are 12 ministries at federal level and 14 departments with 670 borderline agencies in Nepal. The central ministry, departments, regional offices, district offices and borderline offices are the hierarchical system in intra- agencies. At national level there are different working groups and committee form different ministry. At district level, District Administration Office plays a lead role for local border management by instructing and supervising others agencies in inter-agency coordination. In order to maintain peace, security and curtail cross border crime, the security agencies are having cordial cooperation by exchanging high level information exchange, sharing of work, regular training and joint inspection by constructing different working groups. The study suggests establishing a national border management policy to incorporate all tiers agencies by constructing national border management Authority to coordinate all agencies from central level to local level which reduce unnecessary work duplication by amending relevant statutes.*

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## Introduction

Boundary serves different purpose and has numerous functions depending on what those who draw them and what those living among them want to use them for, the nature of international boundary have an impact on livelihoods of local community and the stability of nation-state (Okumu, 2010). Shrestha (2003) defines the concept of the border as an independent nation has its own defined and demarcated boundaries, a permanent population, own strong and independent government and, are also capable of conducting international relations beyond its borders. Governments thus see themselves confronted by policy choices that, on the surface, might appear to be in conflict with one another to facilitate the legitimate movement of people and goods while also maintaining secure borders (IOM, 2017).

An effective border management can help nations and region to achieve a more balanced approach that enhances their own national security, in compliance with international law, and protects the rights and reduce potential vulnerabilities while crossing borders. Good border management serves by helping to balance national interests in both facilitating cross-border movements and maintaining security. Achieving this balance depends upon border management policies and interventions focused on four areas of work: identity management, border management information systems (bmis), integrated border management (ibm) and humanitarian border management (HBM) (IOM, 2017).

Governance is understood as an act of governing a political decision-making process where actors organize themselves through relationship structures, shaping a set of principles and rules in order to implement processes (deliberation, negotiation, decision making) for a “better use of power” to ensure a better performance and or obtain better outcomes (Jose, 2020). Border governance is an act of governing the border areas of any country to boost the mechanisms for better integrations and cooperation to enhance national security. Cross border governance is an act to a strengthened collaboration between actors from the public, private, and non-profit sectors. This collaboration among various levels of the politico-administrative system and across different systems has to be based on exchange and negotiation. Border agency co-operations are based on vertical, horizontal and lateral networks to achieve common goals, values and rules. Even if the territorial aspect is of less importance, cross-border governance activities also show, in most cases, a well-defined spatial reference framework and are always dependent on the specific context, situation, and on the specific actors involved (Zumbusch & Scherer, 2015)

Van Houtum (2000) stated cross-border cooperation (CBC) is considered as a fundamental strategy or political procedure to promote territorial integration by exploiting the opportunities within the border regions. It is possible to appreciate formalized and less formalized forms of CBC for overcoming territorial challenges

that can emerge from the transformation of pre-existing arrangements among the cross-border networks, developing governance structures that involve a variety of stakeholders. International Organization of Migration (IOM, 2017) highlights the implications of ineffective and inefficient border management structures, governments should continue to invest in border management reform, and in enhancing capacity in terms of border and migration management structures and procedures. Good border governance promotes the balance between facilitation of cross-border movement and the need to uphold national security.

#### Coordinated border management (CBM)

Coordinated border management (CBM) refers to a coordinated approach by border agencies, both domestic and international in the context of seeking greater efficiencies over managing trade and travel flows, while maintaining a balance with compliance requirements (Aniszewski, 2009). It is a well-defined rules and regulations in a correct manner to address a strategic issue across the border governing agencies. Aniszewski (2009) further stated in increasing risk that border management organizations perform their functions in a coordinated manner. The lack of communication and coordination between border agencies might prevent different agencies from being able to link the vital information necessary to make an informed decision about potential threats that in turn leads to inefficient delivery of government services. Cross border cooperation (CBC) is considered as a fundamental strategy or political procedure to promote territorial integration by exploiting the opportunities within the border regions (Jose, 2020). In order to manage borders the inter agencies working across portfolio should rely on coordinated manner to achieve a shared goal. Coordinated border management consists of two approaches which are domestic border management and international border management (Polner, 2019). In national level, many more governmental agencies share responsibility for regulating and controlling imports, exports and transit of commercial goods. Different governmental bodies are tasked with ensuring conformity with state regulations and intervene in trade activities on the political as well as the operational level. Border control system usually reflects different national needs and concerns. In order to meet the benefit, all government agencies whose policies include border governance need to be actively engaged on cooperative functions to maximize output. World Custom Organization (WCO, 2009) stated agriculture, health, bio-security, interior, economy, investment and infrastructure, energy justice, environment, port authority, finance and foreign affair as stakeholders in cooperative states bodies in the field of coordinated border management approach.

Good border governance of Nepal requires multi sector cooperation along with policy engagement from domestic and international agencies. Among many issues in border management of Nepal, voices have been raised on lack of coordination

between ministries and governmental agencies for smooth governance. This paper is intended to study inter-agency cooperation in border governance of Nepal. The core objectives of this paper are as follow:

1. To identify governmental agencies of Nepal and their coordinated role and responsibility for good border governance.
2. To understand areas of cooperation with existing intra- agency and inter-agency cooperation by governmental agencies of Nepal.
3. To understand security agency coordination for cross border security management.

### **Literature review**

Caparini (2006) highlighted democratic governance of border management by removing barriers for trade by reassuring domestic population of state to enforce migration control with generating remittance by shifting responsibility with different stakeholders in collaborative manner and shared goals. Coordinated border management is an important element to remove border delays in smooth movement of goods in a region and countries taking concerted measures to address the issues.

Baral (2019) defines border management is a mechanism to ensure the security of national borders and to regulate legitimate movements of goods and people on borders to meet various needs of the nation by cultural-social-economical interactions which are performed through the borders. Baral (2019) further stated collaborate and coordinate efforts are needed to improve the situation along their border by setting up joint task forces to investigate cross-border crimes, sharing real time intelligence, conducting coordinated patrolling, re-installing missing border pillars and repairing the damaged ones and jointly developing infrastructure along the border.

Border security and border management are intertwined to each other.

WCO (2005) argues CBM has existed for many years and refers to a coordinated approach by border control agencies, both domestic and international, in the context of seeking greater efficiencies in managing trade and travel flows, while maintaining a balance with compliance requirements.

CBM represents an approach to manage borders involving public service agencies working across boundaries in a coordinated manner to achieve a shared goal, thus providing a cohesive government response to the challenges of border management. CBM can be referred as a logical way to manage border operations to ensure efficient and effective processes and procedures used by all regulatory agencies who are involved in border security and regulatory requirements that apply to travelers, goods and conveyances crossing international borders. The objective of

a coordinated border management system is to facilitate trade and the clearance of travelers at the same time ensuring secure borders (WCO, 2010).

European Commission (2009) highlighted the concept of integrated border management, an essential element of IOM programming. It encompasses national and international coordination and cooperation among all relevant authorities where all agencies involved in border management and trade facilitation in order to establish effective, efficient and coordinated border management. Integrated border management seeks to enhance three levels of coordination: intra-service, inter-agency and international cooperation.

COMCEC (2016) defines uncoordinated border management as little or no communication, duplicative control, conflicting requirements, separate functional silos whereas coordinated border management as smooth flow of information, streamlined line control, clarity in requirements and cross functional collaboration. Furthermore, the areas of integration in border governance were suggested to be technical, operational, legislative and institutional.

In the real world of international trade, national borders are fraught with obstacles to efficient and profitable trade flows. Oftentimes, the most disruptive obstacles present themselves simply as lack of coordination between government agencies at the border. This lack of coordination leads to poor data sharing, duplicative procedures, and a level of inefficiency that results in delays, product deterioration, and overall reduced profitability. In order to address this degree of disorganization, initiatives must be taken to increase interoperability at the border. This interoperability is often referred to as CBM or integrated border management (IBM). These terms, while seemingly different, both focus on the same goal of increasing trade efficiency. Increased efficiency improves productivity, reliability and profitability for all parties involved. Furthermore, to achieve the goal of efficient trade flows across national borders, a country must address pivotal elements of coordination, including data flow (accumulation, sharing, and dissemination), authority and responsibility at the border, existing trade infrastructure (physical, technological and organizational), legislation and regulation of border activities, and funding availability for project development (IDB, 2010).

CBM is ultimately about cross-border regulatory agencies within the same country, as well as like-minded cross-border regulatory agencies across borders, putting in place official measures, mechanisms and communication channels to ensure that regulatory processes are streamlined and effective (WTO, 2018).

Intra-agency cooperation is about aligning goals and work within one organization, either horizontally between departments or vertically between headquarters and local branches, in particular border-crossing offices and stations. Ways to foster

horizontal intra-agency cooperation include development of intranet networks, cross-training, inter-departmental rotation of staff, and establishment of joint task forces that tackle multifaceted challenges like transnational terrorism (IOM, 2017).

Managing borders include demarking the boundary, providing strong and effective security, arranging cross border movement of people and facilitation of trade and tourism (Shrestha, 2003). The multi-sector engagement with concerned stakeholders needs to have cooperated for better management of border (Upreti, 2021). After reviewing different literatures there is a significant gap in assessing the problem with coordinated border management with inter-agency cooperation in Nepal border governance.

### **Methodology**

For the purpose of identifying border governing agencies of Nepal and their coordinated role, this study used quantitative approach where as to understand existing intra-agency, inter-agency and security agencies cooperation the study used mixed-model approach with descriptive design. Both primary and secondary data have contributed in construction of this paper. Primary data are based on telephonic interview with officers from related agencies whereas secondary data are collected from books, newspaper, articles, journals, and reports. The quantitative data of borderline agencies are extracted from respective agencies website which are shown in table. This paper have revealed different working group of India-Nepal border coordination as most of the border issues are related with Indo-Nepal border.

### **Findings and discussion**

In order to meet the objective of the research, the researcher have sequenced the findings from border management practices, border crossing points, border agencies engaged in Nepal, areas of cooperation and existing different level of inter agencies cooperation in Nepal.

#### **Border management of Nepal**

As an independent nation Nepal has its own defined demarcated boundary. The Treaty of Sugali in the year 1816 A.D. with East India Company and treaty of Betrawati in the year 1792 AD are the major constituent of Nepal's border demarcation. Nepal share 1414 km long controlled border system with China in north. Most of the northern part is covered with high Himalayas and area within 30 km from border is considered as demilitarized area (Shrestha, 2003). Apart from northern side, Nepal shares 1880 km long border with India. Nepal and India signed Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1950 which does not restrict the cross border movement in Indo-Nepal border. The people of both countries share religious and cultural affinity.





### Border agencies of Nepal and their role

To counter all the challenges in border management, Government of Nepal (GoN) have established different functional agency with different tasks. These functional agencies from different clusters are established with different task to achieve a common goal. The growing engagement in cross border activities of Nepal with its neighbor countries requires a good border governance and active role from different governmental agencies. Good border governance requires well coordination among different clusters of administrative, economic, security, intelligence, legal, health and environmental agencies.

There are 12 ministries at federal level and 14 departments with 670 units for border governance in Nepal. All the agencies have their dedicated role and are co-operating each other for common objective to strength border governance.

**Table No 1: Border governing agencies of Nepal**

S.N.	Federal Ministries	Departments & Agencies	Tasks	Border Units
1	Office of Prime Minister and Council of Ministers	1. National Security and Diplomacy Division. 2. National Investigation Department (NID)	1. National Security and Diplomacy Division. i. Cooperation and coordination in international borders, border security, border administration and security of international borders ii. National /international coordination in cross border governance. 2. NID i. Intelligence collection	None
2	Ministry of Defense	Nepalese Army (Survey and Boundary Monitoring Directorate)	Observation of International border.	None



3	Ministry of Home Affairs	<p>1. APF, Nepal                  2. Nepal Police                  3. Immigration Office                  4. District Administration Offices(DAO)</p>	<p>1. APF, Nepal                  i. Maintain Peace and security at border.                  ii. Establish Checkpoints.                  iii. Border Patrolling,                  iv. Inspection of Pillars.                  v. Border Surveillance.                  vi. Revenue, customs, and security                  2. Nepal Police                  i. Law Enforcement                  ii. Crime Investigation                  3. Immigration Office                  i. Monitoring, controlling and regulating entry and exit of foreign nationals.                  4. DAO                  i. Monitoring, regulating and cooperating with all borderline agencies.</p>	<p>1. APF, Nepal                  i. Border Out post.                  ii. Forward Post                  iii. Check Points                  2. Nepal Police                  i. Area Police Station                  ii. Police post (Chauki)                  3. DAO                  i. Border administration offices.</p>
4	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	<p>Embassies and Consulate General Offices.</p>	<p>i. Protection and promotion of rights, interests and security of Nepali nationals living abroad                  ii. Diplomatic exchange.                  iii. Trade and tourism Facilitation.</p>	<p>None</p>

5	Ministry of Finance	i. Department of Custom ii. Inland Revenue Department	i. Revenue collection ii. Budget allocation iii. Seizure of illegal goods.	i. Custom Offices
6	Ministry of Land management, cooperatives and poverty alleviation	i. Department of Land Management	i. International Border Demarcation, border pillars construction and recordkeeping.	None
7	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development.	i. Plant Quarantine and Pesticide Management Centre	i. Inspection of plant and animals on cross border movement.	i. Quarantine Offices
8	Ministry of Health and Population	i. Health Service Department	i. Health treatment at border check points.	Health Posts.
9.	Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transportation	i. Department of Railways	i. Railway service to needy people and facilitate tourism.	None
10.	Ministry of Law		i. Drafting Border Law	None
11.	Ministry of Forest and Environment	i. Forest and wetland Department.	i. Protection of forest and wildlife at border areas.	i. Forest Posts.

12	Ministry of Commerce and Supplies	i. Department of Commerce, Supply and Consumer Protection	i. Facilitate international Trade. ii. Import and export of good	None
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Source: Adapted and modified from OPMCM (2022); MoD (2022); MoHA (2022); MoFA (2022); MoF (2022); MoLCPA (2022); MoALD (2022); MoHP (2022); MoPIT (2022); MoLJPA (2022); MoFE (2022); &MoICS (2022)

As shown in Table 1, there are 12 ministries and 14 departments engaged in border governance of Nepal. Office of Prime Minister and Council of Ministers is the apex units which coordinated neighboring countries for international border management and supervise all others offices for domestic border management. Ministry of Home Affairs is the lead managerial unit which consists Administrative agencies and security agencies. These administrative and security agencies are further deployed in borderline. Ministry of Finance consists trade and custom agencies where its sub units are deployed in border areas as custom offices. Furthermore, different cluster of border governing agencies deployed in district level as shown in the table below.

**Table No 2: Agencies at District level**

<b><u>Administrative Agencies</u></b> i. District Administration Office ii. Immigration Offices. iii. District Forest office. iv. District Transportation Office	<b><u>Custom &amp; Trade Agencies</u></b> i. Custom And Revenue Office. ii. Commerce, Import and Export Office. iii. ICP and Dry Ports iv. Banks and Money Exchange Center
<b><u>Security Agencies</u></b> i. APF, Battalion/Company ii. District Police Office. iii. Nepal Army, Battalion iv. National Investigation Department	<b><u>Health and Safety Agencies</u></b> i. District Quarantine Office. ii. Hospitals and Health Posts. iii. Fire Brigade office.
<b><u>Land Agencies</u></b> i. District Land management Office ii. Survey Office	<b><u>Non-Governmental agencies</u></b> i. Maiti Nepal. ii. World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF) iii. Peace Restoration center.

Source: Author's compilation

## **Areas of cooperation**

Polner (2019) highlighted four areas of cooperation by border governing agencies. They are technical area, operational area, legislative area and institutional area. The border governing agencies of Nepal relies on operational, technical areas and legislative area for cooperation.

### **Operational Area**

Operations are the task which needs to be done. The existence of any agency depends upon its operational capacity. Timely actions are foremost factors of good border governance. All clusters of border agencies of Nepal cooperates each other for operational output. Specially, at borderline the trade and custom agencies are operated to collect revenue form imported goods where security agencies plays a vital role by conducting inspection of goods, confiscation of illegal goods and nabs fugitives. Both the agencies are benefited as both agencies are able to achieve their operational output. The operational achievement can be achieved by sharing of information, cross training, joint- meetings, joint inspection, risk management and knowledge sharing.

### **Technical area**

Good border governance cannot be achieved without adaptation of information and technology. Many countries of world have started smart border management where technology plays dominant role in border governance. Slowly, Nepal has been adapting the use of technology in border governance. All the clusters of border governing agencies coordinates each other to become technological competent. The means of technological cooperation are skill exchange to use electronic devices, cross training of custom and quarantine procedure to security forces, gaining knowledge in GPS tracking system.

### **Legislative area**

Legislative are the legal areas of cooperation by all cluster border governing agencies. The central agencies are policy making agencies. The ministries coordinates each other in drafting of effective border law, rules regulations, guidelines and amends unnecessary laws that acts as a barriers of coordination of borderline agencies.

## **Existing cooperation among border agencies**

Border agency cooperation refers to an organized, shared and collaborative approach by border control agencies to achieve greater efficiency in border security, trade and facilitating legitimate movement of people with maintaining a proper balance with compliance requirements. Greater implementation of border agency

cooperation can lead to secure society, shorter delays in trade quicker release, better predictability and lower costs. In order to reduce the hurdles for proper border governance, a deep coordination between the stakeholders is a predominant task. Borders areas of Nepal were considered to be marginalized area with very little population. These areas were under immediate security threat of dacoits and wild animals. With the development of technology and communication, the borders area of Nepal has been a center of attraction. Many governmental clusters have been assigned for a proper border management. Till now, Ministry of Home Affairs is the leading organizational for border management of Nepal. The others clusters are working under their hierarchical command with intra and inter agencies cooperation and coordination.

### **Intra- agency cooperation**

Intra- agency cooperation refers to cooperation between the same units of one organization. It is also called as vertical approach coordination of same organization from central level to lower levels. It consists of flow of instruction, information, regulations and guidelines from higher authority of lower units. The central ministry, departments, regional offices, district offices and borderline offices are the hierarchical system in intra- agencies. There are different operational areas of ministries and departments of Nepal. Ministry of Home Affairs is responsible for maintaining peace and security of nation along with protecting its border. Being a focal ministry, administrative and security agencies are its under commanded agencies. There is a Security and Coordination Division commanded by joint secretary in MoHA. Under this division, there is Border and Immigration section commanded by undersecretary. Furthermore, security agencies, custom agencies, land management agencies and health agencies also follows intra- agencies coordination from central, regional to borderline units to achieve desired objective.

### **Inter-agency cooperation**

Inter-agency cooperation is the process by which different agencies joins together for the purpose of attaining a common goal. It involves two or more agencies deciding to work together in partnership to achieve a common goal. It is also called as horizontal approach coordination of different organization. Good border governance in Nepal cannot be achieved without inter-agency cooperation. The key element for inter- agency cooperation are institutional guideline, legal and regulatory framework, exchange of information, sharing of infrastructure, training of human resources, joint inspection, sharing of technology and international values. More than 12 ministries at federal level and more than 670 agencies at borderline coordinate each other desired output. At national level there are different working groups and committee form different ministry. At district level, DAO plays a lead role for local border management by instructing and supervising others agencies.

**Table No 3: Inter-agencies cooperation from central to borderline**

<b>Area/ Scope</b>	<b>Organizations</b>	<b>Coordinating Task</b>
Central Level	Office of Prime Minister and Council of Ministers, Ministry of Finance, Defense, Home, Agriculture, Forest, Law, Health, Foreign Affair.	Border inspection and follow-up committee, survey, scrutiny, probe committee
District Level	District Administration Office, District Police Office, APF Battalion/ Company, Intelligence Office, Custom Office, Quarantine Office, District Forest Office, Hospitals,	Joint Field Visit, Joint Training, Information exchange, Joint Operation, Joint command post,
Local level (Border Line)	Local Municipal Offices, Custom points, Integrated check point, Health posts, Border Observation Posts (BOP), Area police offices.	Joint Border area inspection, Joint Meetings for border dispute solution, Joint Awareness program.

Source: Author's compilation

Table 3 shows hierarchy of high level coordination to border line coordination of concern authority. Federal ministries coordinate each other to enhance cross border security and trade facilitation and delegates authority at lower levels. District level agencies acts as a bridge by flowing relevant information, issues order and provide suggestions to border line agencies. Borderline agencies are first liner agencies which are operationally engaged in field.

**Table No 4: Number of border agencies of Nepal**

SN	Agencies	Department	Number of Units		All over the country
			India Border	China Border	
1	Border outpost	APF	220	8	228
2	Area Police station	Nepal Police	160	10	170
3	Custom Office	Custom	151	15	166



4	Quarantine Office	Plant and Quarantine	11	3	14
5	Forest Post	Forest	26	13	39
6	ICP	Intermodal	4	-	4
7	Dry Port (ICD)	Intermodal	5	2	7
8	NGO/ Volunteers	NGO	25	-	25
9	Immigration Office	Immigration	8	2	10
10	Border Administration Offices	Administration	2	5	7

Source: Adapted and modified from MoHA (2022); MoF (2022); MoALD (2022); MoFE (2022); APF (2022); NP (2022); & NITDB (2022)

### **International cooperation**

Center for Strategic and International Studies (2010) has mention that international borders can ignite a war between the neighboring countries unless governed properly. Every state has serious concerns on managing its international border. The flow of goods and services from one region to another region, in one hand has created an opportunity to enhance international trade, and in other hand there is alarmed security distress in international borders. International cooperation concerns the establishment of communication and coordination channels at the local, bilateral and multilateral levels between the agencies of neighboring countries. All forms of coordination are done in order to strength international cooperation which is also termed as cross border cooperation. It includes high level information exchange, sharing of work, regular training and joint inspection. The operational area for international cooperation between the states is cross border trade, cross border immigration, and cross border crimes. The international cooperation is possible by mutual understanding in legal framework and shared values.

Nepal have enhanced in international cooperation with both neighbors. The formal diplomatic relation with China was established in 1955 A.D. After 1955 A.D. trans-border movements were restricted and were controlled. Due to high Himalayan there are only 10 border crossing points and limited governmental agencies are deployed. Nepal has signed a formal diplomatic relation with India on 17 June 1947 A.D. However, the guidelines of border demarcation were set by Sugali Treaty 1816 A.D. To carry out the border demarcation issues, Nepal India Joint Technical Level Boundary Committee (JTC) was formed in November 1981 A.D.

The JTC was tasked to conduct joint field survey to re-establish and reconstruct the boundary pillars that are found lost, and prepare the modality for periodic inspection for cross border governance. JTC consists of inter-agencies mechanism with representative from both countries which resulted into the formation of Border Working Group (BWG), Survey Official Group (SOG) and Field Survey Team (FST). The BWG cooperates on construction of strip map, inventory of border pillars, GPS observation, updating inventory about no-man's land encroachment and other task as mandated. The JTC was dissolved in January 2008 A.D.

**Table No 5: Structure of different working committee**

SN	Working Group	Head Official	Meetings	Task
1	Eminent Person Group	Related Experts	9	Review various aspects of the bilateral relationship.
2	Border Working Group	Head of Survey Department	6	Strip map construction, inventory of pillars, Encroachment solution, border protocol construction.
3	Survey Official Group	Deputy Director of Survey Department	11	Technical Specification, Field Survey, situation report to BWG.
4	Field Survey Team	Chief District Officer	As per necessity	Documentation of Field work, Joint Inspection, situation Report to higher Authority
5	Field Team	Deputy Superintendent of Police	As per necessity	Field Visit, Local level coordination, Exchange of information, Discussion on security issue.

Source: Armed Police Force, Border security Division (2022)

Table 5 shows different working group between India and Nepal. Eminent person group was tasked to review the agreements and treaties, including Nepal-India Friendship Treaty of 1950 A.D. Both team have finalize the joint report, with recommendations on amending bilateral treaties and agreements and further enhance trade, commerce, water resource, people-to-people contact, cultural affinity of the two countries. The final report of EPG is yet to submit to the head of government of both countries. BWG is coordinating in bilateral issues on

land encroachment, trade and security. The field team cooperates at local level according to the work priority.

### **Security agencies coordination**

The border areas of Nepal are considered to be very fragile in terms of security. The northern frontier lies in high altitude having less settlement. Due to very little human settlement, there are not many security issues. Nevertheless, land encroachment, Tibetan refugee, cattle pasture are some issue alarming security concern.

Indo- Nepal border acts as a major security challenge in cross border governance. The porous border limits security agencies of both side to curb illicit trade, smuggling, organized crime, human trafficking, money laundering, illegal migration, poaching of animals, killings and murders.

To guard the unmanned Indo- Nepal border, Government of Nepal officially deployed APF, Nepal in 2007AD. APF, Nepal, as a dedicated border security force, is coordinating with Sastra Sema Bal (SSB) of India and People Armed police force (PAPF) of China as respective counterparts. The comparative deployment of different border security force is as shown in the table below.

**Table No 6: Border security force at Indo- Nepal and Nepal- China Border**

SN	Country	Security Agency	Strength at border	Unit	Km per Post
1	Nepal	APF	12883	228	8.54Km (India Border) 176.75 km (China Border)
2	India	SSB	45000	535	3 km
3	China	PAPF	725	18	78.5 km

Source: Armed Police Force, Border Security Division (2022)

In order to maintain peace, security and curtail cross border crime, the security agency of each country need to have a best level of coordination and cooperation in exchanging relevant information. Exchanging information helps in operational achievement. APF, Nepal, being a border security agency of Nepal have conducted and participated in different cross border coordinating meeting with its counter parts. There have been many security coordination meetings with counter parts of both countries which are as shown below:

**Table No 7: Border security agencies coordination**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Nepal-India Security Meeting</b>	<b>Nepal-China Security Meeting</b>	<b>Total</b>
2015	25	2	27
2016	40	1	41
2017	50	4	54
2018	41	8	49
2019	48	10	58
2020	67	3	70
2021	118	2	120
2022	149	5	154

Source: Armed Police Force, Border Security Division (2022)

By the end of 2021 AD, 120 different meetings were held in different levels. Till mid-2022, 154 meetings between the security agencies were organized. The study finds coordination among the security forces is in increasing trend. Counterpart meetings cover the issues relating to mutual security concerns, intelligence exchange, training and capacity building, disaster management, requirements, exchange of experts/instructors, exchange of high level and functional level visits, joint expeditions and adventure sports activities and joint operation. Joint operations are meant for controlling cross border crimes which includes joint patrol, joint inspections and joint exercises. In recent time, joint patrols are beneficial in confiscating contra band and illegal goods.

**Table No 8: Number of joint patrols and confiscated goods and weapons**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Joint patrol</b>	<b>Confiscated goods (In Billion)</b>	<b>Confiscated Illegal Weapons</b>
2015	78	2.08	45
2016	272	2.43	31
2017	430	2.15	13
2018	686	1.44	13
2019	1068	4.4	38
2020	1314	6.1	30
2021	2779	8.1	35
2022	3323	8.7	25

Source: Armed Police Force, Border Security Division (2022)

## **Need for Improvement**

A well-managed border of any country improves trade, increases revenue; facilitate cross border movement and enhance the security measures. The approachable border between India and Nepal has acts as an opportunity and threat for both countries. Due to adverse terrain, social and cultural affinity, and porous landscape the border management in Nepal have been a daunting task. The government of Nepal has prioritized coordinated approach in border governance. In short span of time, many borderline agencies have been established and have been following the CBM Model. In order to meet up with the globalized world and to enhance coordinated border approach the study suggests the government of Nepal should consider the followings points:

1. Establish a national border management policy incorporating all tiers agencies and including coordinated management approach in all agencies rules and regulation.
2. Establishment of national border management authority consisting of all stakeholders with an authority to coordinate all agencies from central level to local level.
3. Cross agency trainings, joint inspections, resources forecasting and exchanging activities should be prioritize in development of national action plan for inter-agency cooperation for good border governance.
4. Reduce unnecessary work duplication by amending relevant statutes which acts as unrelated acts in cooperating inter agencies corporations.

## **Conclusion**

Most of the countries of the world have been adopting CBM model to facilitate international trade and robust border security. It has been a vibrant instrument to enhance international trade faster and easier. More specifically, coordinated border management is a way to enhance operational efficiency among trade, custom, health and security agencies at the border line. With the growth in globalization in the world, the cross border movement of people also has posed a threat in internal security. By adopting a CBM model, European countries are able to achieve success in curbing its internal security challenge and facilitate its cross border trade and tourism. Border offers both opportunities and challenges as it can be used by terrorist as a gateway, and also a point to collect revenue. Hence, every nation requires adopting good border governance.

Lately, Nepal has adopted coordinated border management with engagement of multi-sector for better border governance. The acceptance of WCO Kyoto Convention for one stop border posts, joint public- private partnership, harmonized

relationship between the working agencies need to adopt for better result. Lack of border outposts, custom, quarantine and immigration office at borders areas have impetus for border crimes in Nepal.

The essence of CBM is technical and operational integration of different agencies. It is therefore necessary for horizontal and vertical cooperation to have operational efficiency to achieve the targeted output. In Nepal, most of cooperation takes place at ad hoc basic. It is necessary to have routine based meetings, visits, inspections and cross trainings. Gradually, Nepal is strengthening its capacity for border security. The number of security post of APF, Nepal has been increased with a target to meet 500 border outposts. Apart from enhancing border security, it is also necessary to synchronize all other agencies for the better governance.

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