

UPF and IAAP Kathmandu, Nepal Discuss the Impact of COVID-19 on Education

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Kathmandu, Nepal -- UPF and the International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAAP) in Nepal hosted a "Peace Talks" webinar on the topic, "COVID-19 Pandemic and Its Impact on Education: Finding a Way Forward," on June 6, 2020, with around 90 participants.

The former cabinet minister of Nepal and chairman of UPF and the International Association of Parliamentarians of Peace (IAPP) of the Asia Pacific, Hon. Ek Nath Dhakal emphasized that state organizations, schools, parents and teachers have an important role to play in contributing to resolving the challenges that have emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The founding vice chancellor of Kathmandu University, Dr. Suresh Raj Sharma, said that people should not be fearful during this unprecedented crisis, but must discover new solutions. He stressed the need to focus on skills-based education and spoke of establishing a skills ministry of government if necessary. He also suggested UPF can support training youth.

The president of the Private and Boarding School Organization of Nepal (PABSON), Mr. Tikaram Puri, said that many private and boarding schools are bankrupt because they have no income and are on the verge of closing. He said: "[Our classes] definitely have to be virtual. This COVID-19 pandemic has given us [an opportunity] to link technology to education."

The president of the National Private and Boarding Schools Association Nepal (NPABSAN), Mr. Ritu Raj Sapkota, said new options for education must be discovered.

The chairman of Capitol Hill, Mr. Narayan Sharma Gajurel, said that a pandemic not only brings problems but also presents a way out. As far as education is concerned, the "only way out is holding virtual classes through different means."

The president of the Teachers' Association for the Research of Principles (TARP), Dr. Shree Ram Prasad Upadhyaya, underscored the need to develop skills-based education for children. He said, "Let them learn by doing something."

T.R. Dhakal stressed that social, economic and educational systems have been completely destroyed, as a result of COVID-19 and that good mechanisms need to be developed to address the situation.

The director of UPF-South Asia, Mr. Santosh Kumar Paudel, asked that a new way out be developed based on the pandemic the world is facing.