

Prof Mahendra P Lama

Prof Mahendra P Lama (b 1961), a development economist, has been a senior Professor in the School of International Studies in Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He is presently Chief Economic Adviser in the rank of a Cabinet Minister in the Government of Sikkim. He was the Founding Vice Chancellor of the Central University of Sikkim and became the youngest VC of a national University in India. He served as a Member, National Security Advisory Board, Government of India; Chief Economic Adviser in the Government of Sikkim with a Cabinet Minister Rank (2002-2007) and the Pro-Vice Chancellor of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi. He is presently Government of India's nominee in the Eminent Persons Group set up by the Prime Ministers of India and Nepal. He was bestowed full professorship by JNU at a relatively young age of 38.

He has been a High End Expert in the Institute of South Asian Studies, Sichuan University, in China; Visiting Professor, Tsukuba University and Hitotsubashi University in Japan; Nehru-Fulbright Education Administrator's Fellow in USA; India-China Fellow at the New School University in USA; Visitor to the European Union, Brussels; Ford Foundation Fellow at Notre Dame University, USA; Asia Leadership Fellow in Japan and a number of universities in India. He has also been nominated by President of India in the Governing Boards and Executive Councils of various leading institutions of India. He headed Indian delegation of the Vice Chancellors to UK and China. He has been in the Editorial Board of a number of national and international journals.

Acclaimed as the Architect of the reopening of the historic Nathu la trade route between Sikkim in India and Tibet Autonomous Region in China after 44 years in 2006, he has served as a member of the High Level National Committee to examine the Sixth Schedule Areas in the North East Region (2007); a member of the National Committee to revamp North Eastern Council (2004) and Member of the Prime Ministers' Task Force on Hill and Mountain Development. He is the co-author of the North East Vision 2020 of Ministry of Development for NER.

The NITI Aayog is now preparing India Vision 2035 wherein Prof Lama has been invited to write the chapter on the North East region Vision 2035.

He also drafted the First Plan of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (1988) and several plan and budget documents of Government of Sikkim; and authored the 1st Sikkim Human

Development Report 2001; Sikkim Development Report 2008 and Economic Survey of Sikkim. He has evaluated a number of development projects in the Eastern Himalayan Region. He was also commissioned to write a full paper on the Border Areas in North East India by the 13th Finance Commission. He has been engaged with the NEC on studies related to repositioning the North East Region of India in India's Act East Policy and Cooperative Federalism.

He regularly writes in prominent national dailies in India and South Asia including ***Hindu, Hindustan Times, Times of India, Telegraph, Statesman, Deccan Herald, Financial Express, Patriot, Tribune, Economic Times, DNA and Indian Express.*** He is also frequently interviewed by the top TV and radio channels.

Besides he served various High Level Committees set up by SAARC Summit leaders including as a member of the Independent Expert Group and coveted South Asia Forum set up by the Heads of the States and Governments in the SAARC Summits held in 1997 in Colombo and Thimphu in 2010 respectively. He has been a Jury member in the prestigious Sahitya Akademy Award, New Delhi and a member of the Civil Service Interview Board of the Union Public Service Commission of India. Besides being in the Editorial Board of a number of national and international journals, he regularly writes in prominent national dailies in India and South Asia and is also frequently interviewed by the top TV and radio channels. He has been associated as a professional with the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, United Nations Development Programme, UNESCAP, USAID, Economic Research Institute of ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), Australian Aid Agency, IDRC of Canada and ICIMOD in Kathmandu.

His recent work includes "Human Security in India : Discourse, Practices & Policy Implications" (University Press Limited, Dhaka, 2010); coauthored book "India-China Rethinking Border and Security" (Michigan University Press, US, 2016) and coauthored book *Energising Connectivity between Northeast India and its Neighbours* (co authored with V Anbumozhi and Ichiro Kutani), Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), Jakarta, 2019.

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