

## world

# China's Xi warns attempts to divide China

● Nepal's Oli told Xi that the country will oppose any "anti-China activities" on its soil

● Xi, the first Chinese president to visit Nepal in 22 years

Reuters | Beijing

Chinese President Xi Jinping warned yesterday that any attempt to divide China will be crushed, as Beijing faces political challenges in months-long protests in Hong Kong and US criticism over its treatment of Muslim minority groups.

"Anyone attempting to split China in any part of the country will end in crushed bodies and shattered bones," he told Nepal's Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli in a meeting on Sunday, according to China's state broadcaster CCTV.

"And any external forces backing such attempts dividing China will be deemed by the Chinese people as pipe-dreaming!" he was quoted as saying.

Xi, the first Chinese president to visit Nepal in 22 years, arrived in Nepal on Saturday on a state visit. Both sides are expected to sign a deal expanding a railway link between the Himalayan nation and Tibet.

Nepal's Oli told Xi that the country will oppose any "anti-China activities" on its soil, CCTV reported.

China, which is trying to de-escalate a protracted trade



Nepal's President Bidhya Devi Bhandari shakes hands with China's President Xi Jinping during a welcome ceremony at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu, Nepal



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XI JINPING

war with the United States, has seen its political authority tested by increasingly violent protests in Hong Kong against what is seen as Beijing's tightening grip on the Chinese-ruled city.

Police in Hong Kong have used rubber bullets, tear gas and water cannons against pro-democracy demonstrators in the former British colony, which has been plunged into its worst political crisis in decades.

US president Donald Trump had said it would be difficult to negotiate with China if anything "bad" happens in Chinese authorities' handling of the Hong Kong protests.

Trump said he discussed the issue of Hong Kong with Chinese Vice Premier Liu He on Saturday during their latest round of talks. Both sides reached a "phase-one deal" that has raised optimism for a broader agree-

## Multiple arrests as "flashmob" protests hit pro-Beijing targets

Hong Kong

Riot police clashed with anti-government protesters across Hong Kong yesterday as masked activists vandalised businesses deemed sympathetic to Beijing in another week-end of chaos in the financial hub.

Rallies erupted in multiple neighbourhoods, with some protesters blocking roads, sabotaging train tracks, and trashing pro-China businesses.

Police said an officer was taken to hospital after his neck was slashed. Local television networks also broadcast footage of a man beaten bloody by protesters after they found a baton in his bag and suspected him of being an undercover officer.

Police have increasingly posed as protesters, scoring some tactical successes and sparking widespread paranoia among frontline demonstrators.

During cat-and-mouse encounters on Sunday officers made dozens of arrests, but there were fewer protesters than have taken to the streets more recently during the four-

ment although many fundamental issues remained unresolved and existing tariffs are still not lifted.

Washington last week also blacklisted 28 Chinese companies over Beijing's treatment



A four-metre statue known as "Lady Liberty" is placed by pro-democracy protesters on the top of Lion Rock, a Hong Kong landmark



Police clear barricades left by protestors. Clashes between police and activists were less intense than at the start of October when the city was virtually shut down

month long protest movement.

'Blossom everywhere' Online forums used to organise the largely leaderless

movement advertised yesterday as a "blossom everywhere" day, encouraging activists to gather in malls across the city.

of predominantly Muslim ethnic minorities. China has faced growing international condemnation for what it calls re-education and training centers in the remote western region of Xinjiang. Activists say they are

mass detention camps holding more than 1 million ethnic Uighurs and other Muslims.

Before arriving in Nepal, Xi was in India for talks with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

## Xi Jinping promises Nepal \$493 million aid, development

● 3.5 billion RMB (\$493 million) of aid between 2020-2022

● Nepali and Chinese officials signed at least 15 agreements

● Feasibility study to construct a tunnel from China's Kerung to Kathmandu

Kathmandu

China and Nepal hailed the "beginning of a new era" in relations yesterday as President Xi Jinping ended his visit with promises of a railway and tunnel connecting the two countries.

Xi announced 3.5 billion RMB (\$493 million) of aid between 2020-2022 "to uplift the living standard of Nepali people" during talks with President Bidhya Devi Bhandari, an official said.

Kathmandu has also sought closer ties and much-needed energy and infrastructure investments from Beijing.

In a joint statement the two countries said Xi's visit "marked the beginning of a new era in



Chinese President Xi Jinping, left, and Nepalese Prime Minister Khadga Prasad Oli greet during their bilateral meeting in Kathmandu, Nepal



We will develop a multi-dimensional trans-Himalayan connectivity network and help Nepal to realise its dream to transform itself from a landlocked country to land-linked country

XI JINPING

Nepal-China relations and served as an important milestone in the history of friendly cooperation".

During the visit Nepali and Chinese officials signed at least 15 agreements, including a feasibility study for a cross-border railway project that would give Beijing access to the south through Nepal's open border with India.

"We will develop a multi-dimensional trans-Himalayan connectivity network and help Nepal to realise its dream to transform itself from a landlocked country to land-linked



China has intensified its presence in Nepal in recent years, pumping millions of dollars into projects ranging from roads to hydropower plants

country," Xi said in his address during a banquet on Saturday evening.

They also undertook to carry out another feasibility study to construct a tunnel from China's Kerung to Kathmandu and to repair existing highways, as well as to strengthen hydropower, security, trade and education links.

Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli's foreign affairs adviser Rajan Bhattarai said Xi showed "China is ready to help Nepal

with (an) open heart on its goal of development and prosperity, (helping with) infrastructure development and enhancing connectivity".

Nepali Times editor Kunda Dixit said the key test would be if China's deals help boost the impoverished nation's economy.

"The big test of whether or not Xi's visit will benefit Nepal is if these infrastructure projects will help Nepal become more self-re-

liant and use access to China to sell our goods, not increase our dependence," he said.

China has intensified its presence in Nepal in recent years, pumping millions of dollars into projects ranging from roads to hydropower plants.

In 2017, Nepal signed up to China's Belt and Road initiative, a vast global infrastructure programme, which includes the building or upgrading of highways and airports in the country.