Respected Brothers and Sisters,

Today, I am here before you not to talk about my health, but to discuss about the public health. Now, the entire world is passing through the most difficult mode in history arisen due to the pandemic of corona virus. Most of the countries in the world are badly affected by this pandemic. Fortunately, no direct effect of this pandemic has yet been seen in Nepal. However, we are not in a position to be complacent from the risk of this pandemic.

Health and security of citizens has always been on my top priority. Aware of the potential risk of corona virus pandemic and of its impact, I have been instructing from the very beginning to the authorities to work by formulating of a clear action plan. Since the very beginning, the government has been making special preparations by devising strategies, such as preventing the pandemic from entering the country, raising awareness, making arrangements for surveillance, quarantine, and treatment of infected persons. All you know that in this process, Nepali students were rescued from Wuhan city of China after five preparatory meetings held under my leadership, and managed quarantine for them.

Before I went to the hospital for my second kidney transplant, I had formed a high-level committee under the leadership of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defense Hon. Mr. Ishwor Pokhrel to work in my absence by taking policy leadership to address the problem. Similarly, I had made arrangements to implement the decisions taken by the Action Committee led by the Chief Secretary. The federal government has been carrying out its efforts through these mechanisms in coordination with the provincial governments and local levels.

Sisters and Brothers,

It is not easy to fight against a pandemic. It has become urgent for us to change our behavior and adjust our daily routine for some time. This might bring some unease in our lives. It might affect our habits and daily behaviours. But, we do not have any alternative to defeat the potential contagion. Therefore, in my capacity as the prime minister trusted by you, I would like to request you to:

- pay enough attention to hygiene; wash your hands frequently with soap and water and use sanitizer;
- maintain social distance; avoid crowds;
- stay at home as far as possible;
- do not hoard essential goods;
- do not get confused and influenced by misinformation and rumors;
• follow the advice of doctors, experts, and technicians;
• be patient and restraint;
• remain alert but do not panic.

All who have come from infected countries must stay in quarantine for at least 14 days in order to safeguard their own life, to save their families and to save the community from contagion. I am confident that all sisters and brothers will act responsibly at this difficult time.

The government will leave no stone unturned for prevention, control, and treatment of this pandemic. For this, high priority has been placed on providing services from all hospitals all over the country, and making arrangements for adequate medicines and equipments and required human resources. Arrangements have been made to mobilize, with appropriate incentives and high morale, the human resources who have to be directly involved in this task, including doctors, nurses, health workers, and security bodies. Employees and service providers of private sectors shall be encouraged to provide services from home if there is possibility to deliver services electronically.

However, all government employees and private sector employees associated with essential services shall work as usual regularly from their offices.

Arrangements have been made to operate all types of vehicles including private ones that are required for providing public services.

In coordination with the private sector, arrangements have been made for regular supply of essential consumable goods including food items. But, I would like to make it clear that strong legal action will be taken against anyone who, taking advantage of the difficult time, engages in criminal activities such as creation of artificial scarcity, hoarding, black marketing and adulteration in foods.

The Ministry of Finance is meticulously studying the impacts of the global pandemic on Nepal's overall economy. After analyzing the current and possible impacts on economy, the government will soon bring appropriate programs to save economy from shrinking. The government is sensitive towards the possible adverse impacts of the pandemic on entrepreneurs and workers - the partners of the world of work and will address it accordingly.

Sisters and Brothers,

Bearing in mind our health and security, a compelling situation has arisen to implement following measures in some sectors:
• All international flights coming to Nepal have been suspended effective from March 22 until 31.
• Putting health security of the passengers at the border points on priority, arrangements will be made for mandatory health checkup to protect from transmission of the corona
viruses. There will be necessary coordination with the neighboring countries in this regard.

- Except the essential services as published in the Nepal Gazette, all other services provided by public, community and private sectors at federal, provincial and local levels will be suspended from March 22 until April 3.
- Effective from March 22, long-distance passenger vehicles will be suspended throughout Nepal for some time.
- Crowded places like cinema halls have been shut down for the time being.
- Teaching learning activities and examinations at schools and universities have been have been postponed for the time being.
- Analyzing the situation of the pandemic, additional steps might be taken based on your cooperation.

The Government of Nepal is alert and sensitive to minimize inconveniences as much as possible to Nepali sisters and brothers both inside and outside the country as well as other travelers caused by the above-mentioned arrangements. I would like to assure that the government will remain effortful to end this difficult situation at the earliest and to restore normal life.

It is a matter of happiness that the spirit of national unity to resolve this crisis has been reflected through the unanimously adopted resolution that was presented to the parliament and the views expressed during the all party meeting. I earnestly urge everyone involved in this mission, including government bodies, civil society organizations, media, and others to demonstrate spirit of national solidarity through mutual cooperation.

A large number of Nepali sisters and brothers have been residing outside Nepal. I am aware that due to the corona virus pandemic, there is some inconvenience to you to return back to Nepal. At this time, I would like to request you not to panic and worry and, also request to contact Nepali diplomatic mission in the country of your residence when necessary. I would like to inform you that our missions will help you as much as they can to solve your problem.

Soon after I was discharged from the hospital, I had addressed the video conference of SAARC heads of state and governments initiated by the Prime Minister of India His Excellency Mr. Narendra Modi. I had made commitment that Nepal would also contribute to the joint fund proposed by the Indian Prime Minister to fight against corona virus pandemic. I would like to announce that Nepal will contribute one hundred million rupees to this fund. In order to fight against this pandemic, we are committed to join hands with our neighbors, regional friends and international community in the spirit of mutual goodwill and cooperation.

With your support, we will be able to protect people from potential infection of corona virus that has emerged as a pandemic. I would like to thank the private sector, different organizations, both neighbors, other friendly countries, and international community for all kinds of goodwill and support we have received so far towards achieving this goal. I am confident to receive continued cooperation from neighbors, other friendly countries and international organizations in the days to come.
I have heard about the discussions you had regarding my willpower and high morale as the main factors for speedy recovery after my kidney transplant and subsequent treatment. At this hour, the country demands our strong will power and high morale. I am confident that our will power, high morale and unity will play a decisive role in moving ahead by controlling and defeating the pandemic of corona virus.

We strongly fought against the devastating earthquake of 2015 and the adversities arisen thereafter. I have no doubts that all sisters and brothers will stand together and provide full support at this difficult hour.

Thank you.