

Status of civil society found weak

By Our Correspondent

KATHMANDU, May 11: Despite the active role of civil society in the recent democratic movement, the status of civil society in Nepal is found to be weak.

A research carried out in 62 countries reflected that all the four major sectors — structure, environment, values and impacts related to Civil Society are much weaker in Nepal than many other countries.

Institute of Cultural Affairs Nepal (ICA-Nepal) carried out a yearlong study with the technical support of CIVICUS (World Alliance for Citizen Participation based in South Africa).

Taru Timilsina of ICA-Nepal said that the ICA-Nepal carried out massive survey work covering eight districts from different development regions. It also carried out media

review of two months. ICA-Nepal interviewed 100 experts and activists of Civil Society. It also organised workshops and community survey to record their feelings and aspirations.

The study has indicated that the Civil Society in Nepal has bitter experience in the past. From time immemorial, civil societies have been established and focused for development. Timilsina said that during dissolution of parliament, the civil societies were also in a state of depression since the rights of the CSOs guaranteed by the constitution were severely violated. CSO activists were threatened and prosecuted by the state.

He said that ICA-Nepal is carrying out a series of activities on enhancing democratisation of internal democracy within CSOs,

advocating for the democratisation process, enabling the community through poverty reduction and development, building human and institutional capacity.

NAG is formed to guide the overall process of the survey, which was geared to judge the status of civil society in the country. One-minute silence was also observed in the beginning in the remembrance of all the martyrs who sacrificed their life in the recent democratic movement in the country.

ICA Nepal is organising a conference of Civil Society stakeholders on May 26 in which more than 100 civil society experts, activists and interested people are expected to participate. The conference will review the study and recommend future strategies for civil society development in the country.