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PRESS RELEASE

## Just Futures Pahal Announces

## Seven Inaugural Just Futures Fellows from Bagmati Province

Just Futures Pahal (JFP) is proud to announce the selection of **seven talented young Dalit women from Bagmati Province** as its new Just Futures Fellows (JFF). These individuals are: **Sarina Dyola, Manjita Pariyar, Pramila B K, Kanchan Katuwal, Radhika Roka, Manika Biswakarma and Sangita Mizar.**

Rooted in the core ethos of "Weaving our own stories"(जिमिगु बाखं जिमिसं हे म्वये), this fellowship prioritizes the **lived experiences, love, joy, aspirations, and knowledge of Dalit women**. It is designed to creatively explore new meanings and connections between their invaluable community-based experiences and national and global learnings. These community-based, talented Dalit women, as Just Futures Fellows at the heart of JFP, offer distinct learning spaces for reimagining narratives surrounding caste questions in Nepal and beyond.

Through creatively designed interdisciplinary seminars, immersive workshops, and practical field-based studies, facilitated by dynamic JFP faculty and collaborations with reputed scholars and institutions worldwide, the JFF will critically deepen the understandings of all involved. The new fellows, active in fields ranging from journalism and writing to teaching and political life, will embark on a journey of learning and analysis, exploring their personal and social experiences as Dalit women. The Fellowship will focus on both the constitutive and intersectional questions involving **caste, class, gender, sexuality, and inclusive democracy** within Nepal and globally.

The call for applications was open to Dalit women, Dalit sexual and gender minorities identifying as women, and Newa Dalit women, aged 20 to 40 years, permanently residing in Bagmati Province. Out of **201 applicants** from various districts, **16 shortlisted candidates** underwent interviews and were rigorously ranked by a distinguished three-member committee. This committee included: **Madhu Mahara**, a Damal Fellow and Just Futures Fellow from Madhes; **Anjana Bishankhe**, former parliamentarian and Damal Fellow/Faculty; and **Dr. Mukta Singh Lama**, anthropologist, Tribhuvan University. The final selection of the seven Just Futures Fellows (JFF) and alternates was conducted by the Board of Directors of Just Futures Pahal. This new Just Futures Fellowship draws on the invaluable experience of the Just Futures Initiative at Samata Foundation, which was primarily conceptualized, designed, and managed by the team that now forms the core of Just Futures Pahal.

Sarita Pariyar, a writer, pursuing a PhD at Cornell University, and the founding chairperson of Just Futures Pahal (JFP), reflects on this unique learning-teaching initiative: "Nepal's intellectual history is fundamentally a history of caste-power. Just Futures Pahal, rooted in Dalit feminist epistemology, exemplifies the transformative potential of centering Dalit women's knowledge, capabilities, and agency. It's more than a response to the persistent injustices of the caste system; it's a deliberate and strategic intervention designed to recognize Dalit women as knowledge producers and architects of their own futures."

This intensive 12-month fellowship will engage seven young women from various Dalit communities, including Newa Dalits, across Bagmati Province and the Kathmandu Valley, and a group of JFP Faculty members. JFP aims to curate up to 500 JFF over the next ten years in Nepal, which will form a substantive new pool of unlikely storytellers, narrators, and knowledge producers on caste, class, gender, and sexuality in Nepal and beyond.

For more information, please visit [www.justfuturespahal.org](http://www.justfuturespahal.org).



Sona Khatik ,

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