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FORUM
Dr. Prabin Manandhar



INTERVIEW
Ms Veronique Riotton



FACE TO FACE
Mr. SAMIM MIYA ANSARI

NEW SPOTLIGHT

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March.- 25, 2022

FORTNIGHTLY

TRISHULI 3 B HYDROPOWER PROJECT

On High Gear

INSIDE



**EU SUPPORT TO PILACHHEN
REVIVING TRADITION**



**KATHMANDU-TERAI EXPRESSWAY
WORK IN PROGRESS**



**EARLY WARNING SYSTEM IN HYDROPOWER
MAKING A DIFFERENCE**



हिमालरेमिट मुद्दती खाता

१२.०३%

ब्याजदर

*शर्तहरू लागू हुनेछन्

व्यक्तिगत मुद्दती खाता

११.०३%

ब्याजदर

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With the House of Representatives and National Assembly prorogued, Nepal's major political parties are heading to woo the voters in the forthcoming local polls. Ruling alliance led by Nepali Congress has been projecting MCC, autonomy of local levels and development projects like road, drinking water and electrification at local level as main elections plank. Main opposition CPN-UML too is taking all issues, including the completion of Melamchi, Upper Tamakosi and other projects during its tenure as the main agenda. To fan nationalism, CPN-UML leader KP Sharma Oli has even declared Ram as Nepali prince as his slogan. At a time when common people have been facing difficulties in getting national Identity Card, e-Passport and dealing with economic burden caused by Covid-19 Pandemic, no other agenda looks to work this time. CPN-UML swept local, provincial and national elections with anti-Indian slogan and alliance with Maoist center. However, the current situation is different. If the five-party alliance contests the elections united, CPN-UML will have a hard time. Although the election fever is slowly and gradually gripping the country, we have decided to cover the revival of a Pillachhen city of Patan as our main story. With the support from European Union and close collaboration with local communities and local levels, UN Habitat, Pillachhen has shown a way to empower women and generate employment by promoting tourism through local heritage and local culture.

Keshab Poudel

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International Women's Day: Break The Bias



Gender bias contributes to disparities between women and men caused by differential treatment based on a person's real or perceived gender identity or gender expression, and not based on their capabilities.

Biases are developed early in life, largely influenced by our social, cultural, and political contexts. influence our actions or inactions. As a result, in a patriarchal value system, it becomes difficult for women and girls to advance in the workplace, development, and opportunities.

The International Women's Day (IWD) 2022 has chosen the "Break the Bias" campaign theme: A world free of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination. A world that's diverse, equitable, and inclusive. A world where difference is valued and celebrated.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, during self or home quarantine, domestic violence has significantly grown with multiple impacts on women's wellbeing, their mental and physical health, and their ability to participate and lead in the recovery of society. According to a UN report, countries have experienced an average 30% increase in calls to domestic violence helplines since the start of the pandemic.

Girls are at risk of early or forced marriage due to an increasing number of children falling into poverty. UNFPA estimates indicate that the COVID-19 will disrupt efforts to end child marriage, potentially resulting in an additional 13 million child marriages taking place between 2020 and 2030 that could otherwise have been averted.

Loss of income, harmful social norms or traditional practices, lack of health services (including reproductive health), and lack of safe shelter for GBV survivors are among some of the top reported GBV risks. However, the magnitude of violence against women and girls indicates that GBV is not just an isolated incidence but created by unequal power relations between women and men, and rigid gender roles, norms, and hierarchies. Further, there are multiple inequalities between men and women based on intersecting identities

such as caste, ethnicity, race, (dis)ability, age, sexual orientation, and civil status.

Nepal has made strong commitments to advancing gender equality and eliminating all forms of discrimination, but there is still a long way to go before it attains gender equality. Women and girls face significant discrimination with continuing social and economic exclusion. The major problems of gender equality, as pointed out by the Fifteenth Plan (2020-21 to 2024-25), include the prevalence of behavioral discrimination against women, and the persistence of societal structures, beliefs, values, and traditional practices that promote illiteracy, harmful practices, gender-based discrimination and violence against women.

Coming back to the IWD 2022 campaign theme, Break The Bias, we must acknowledge that conscious and/or

unconscious gender bias can exist at every level of our society, including household, community, and institution. We must get rid of one common bias that women are weak. In many situations, women are portrayed as how men see them not how women see themselves. Women are not weak, rather they are calm, composed, and emotionally stronger than men.

Gender bias often starts at home. We need girl power with positive social norms that contribute to

women's empowerment, independence, strength, and confidence. Let's work collectively to ensure every girl and woman feels valued and to Break the Bias!



Dr. Prabin Manandhar is an expert in international development. Currently, he is working as Country Director of Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation Nepal. He is the Former Chair of the Association of International NGOs in Nepal (AIN). He is also a visiting faculty at Kathmandu University and the Tribhuvan University Institute of Crisis Management Studies. The opinions are of his own and not that of his employer. He can be reached at prabin.manandhar11@gmail.com

NEWSNOTES

Nepal, Saudi Arabia Sign General Cooperation Agreement



Upon completion of his two days' official visit to Nepal, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia His Highness Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud left Kathmandu with Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal bidding the visiting dignitary a farewell at the Tribhuvan International Airport.

Earlier, Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. Narayan Khadka had held a bilateral meeting with his Saudi counterpart in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The two Foreign Ministers discussed about the diverse areas of cooperative bilateral relations and underlined the need to further explore possibilities of cooperation, including in the field of foreign employment, welfare and interest of Nepali migrant workers, increasing the number of Hajj pilgrims from Nepal, strengthening of economic partnership, and cooperation in multilateral forums.

The two Foreign Ministers also signed General Cooperation Agreement between the Government of Nepal and the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Foreign Minister Prince Farhan Al Saud also paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba at Baluwatar. During the call, various aspects of Nepal-Saudi Arabia bilateral relations as well as cooperation in the multilateral forums were discussed.

The Prime Minister extended best wishes for the success of the Saudi Vision 2030 and discussed about the ways and means of further strengthening economic partnership and cooperation between the two countries, including the interests and wellbeing of Nepali migrant workers.

During his visit, Saudi foreign Minister paid a courtesy call on President Mrs. Bidya Devi Bhandari at the latter's office, Sheetal Niwas. During the courtesy call, matters related to Nepal-Saudi Arabia relations were discussed.

Ground Breaking Of India-Funded TU Central Library

Vinay Mohan Kwatra, Ambassador of India to Nepal and Devendra Paudel, Minister of Education, Science and Technology, Government of Nepal jointly performed ground



breaking ceremony for the Tribhuvan University Central Library (TUCL) project being built under Government of India's USD 50 million grant assistance in education sector.

According to a press release issued by Embassy of India Kathmandu, the event was also attended

by senior officials of Tribhuvan University, representatives from the Embassy, Central Level Project Implementation Unit (CLPIU) in Nepal and other stakeholders.

On the occasion, a Memorandum of Understanding was also signed between Ministry of Education, Science & Technology, Government of Nepal and Embassy of India for implementation of the project. The Library is being constructed at a cost of NRs 316.9 million and will be built as per earthquake-resilient reconstruction norms of Nepal.

This new 3-storey building of Tribhuvan University Central library will be equipped with modern facilities and will include several academic sections along with ancillary facilities. Central Building Research Institute (CBRI), a premier institute in India in the field of earthquake-resilient reconstruction, will provide technical expertise for construction of this library.

India has committed USD 250 million earthquake reconstruction grant assistance to the Government of Nepal. Of this, USD 50 million is in the education sector under which 71 educational institutions across eight districts are being built; 14 of these have been already handed over and remaining are under active construction.

KOICA Supports Hospital Waste Management Program

Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) through its KOV program supported health project partners in hospital waste management program. Nepal Korea Friendship Municipality Hospital, Nuwakot District Hospital and Tikapur Hospital were provided with Horizontal Cylindrical Triple Walled High Pressure Biomedical Waste Autoclave Machine for the purpose of health waste management. The total budget of the program was USD 42,100. A handover program was organized in Nepal Korea Friendship Municipality hospital in March 15, 2022 in the presence of Madan Sundar Shrestha,



Mayor of Madhyapur Thimi Municipality, Yoonhee Chung, Deputy Country Director of KOICA and representatives from Nepal Korea Friendship Municipality hospital.

KOICA Nepal Office has been promoting Green ODA in each of its development cooperation programs from the year 2021. Since then KOICA Nepal has been organizing and implementing different types of programs related to environment and climate change. As an initiation of Green ODA campaign, last year KOICA supported 5 schools of Kagesh-wori Manohara Municipality and 2 schools of Lalitpur Metropolitan city with regards to environmental issues of schools with the technical support from DOKO Recyclers.

Nepal, India 14th JCIFM Concludes

Fourteenth Meeting of Nepal, India Joint Committee on Inundation and Flood Management (JCIFM) meeting concluded in Kathmandu

The 14th meeting of the India - Nepal Joint Committee on Inundation and Flood Management [JCIFM] was held between 09 to 13 March, 2022 in Nepal. The meeting was co-chaired by Sher Singh, Member (Planning), Ganga Flood Control Commission (GFCC) on the Indian side and the Susheel Chandra Acharya, DG, Department of Water

Resources and Irrigation (DWRI) on the Nepali side. The minutes of the meeting were signed on 14th March, 2022.

The Joint Committee also undertook site visits to various areas on the India-Nepal border where management of flood,

erosion and inundation issues fall within the Committee's mandate.

The Committee also visited the sites of emergent works proposed to be undertaken on a set of rivers in the border areas. The site visit, which took place from 09 to 12 March, 2022, was followed by the main meeting in Kathmandu on 13th March, 2022.

Similarly, the 2nd Project Monitoring Committee (PMC) meeting on construction of Government of India-funded Nepal Bharat Maitri Polytechnic (NBMP) at Hetauda in Makwanpur district of Nepal was also held.

Satish Sivan, Joint Secretary (DPA-III Division), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and Kamal Prasad Pokhrel, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Government of Nepal, co-chaired the meeting.

The meeting reviewed the overall implementation and progress of the project. The PMC directed the contractor and the consultant of the project for timely completion. Both sides noted that Covid pandemic had posed a major challenge to the project progress, but now it has come out of those challenges and is in the final stages of completion.

Rs.2.7B Japan Grant For Water Supply Project In Biratnagar

The Government of Japan has decided to extend grant assistance of up to two billion, five hundred and forty-one million Japanese Yen (¥2,541,000,000), approximately NRs. 2.7 billion, to the Government of Nepal for the implementation of the Project for the Improvement of Water Supply in Biratnagar.

Kikuta Yutaka, Ambassador of Japan to Nepal, and Madhu Kumar Marasini, Secretary of the Ministry of Finance

signed notes to this effect.

Another Grant Agreement for implementing the project was signed by OKUBO Akimitsu, Chief Representative of JICA Nepal and Ishwori Prasad Aryal, Joint Secretary, the International Economic Cooperation and Coordination Division of the Ministry of Finance. This project aims to enhance the living standard for the people of Biratnagar City by renovating and expanding the water supply facilities, thereby broadening the water supply area in Biratnagar City.

At present, people in Biratnagar have to depend on shallow wells to get water for daily household use and have been affected by shortage of safe drinking water. This project will contribute to improving "access to stable supply of water" for about 100,000 people by constructing new deep wells and water purification facilities. Furthermore, some of the existing facilities will also be renovated.

On the occasion of signing the notes, Ambassador KIKUTA stated that "the Government of Japan has been providing multifaceted assistance for the betterment of the living standard of Nepali citizens". During the COVID-19 pandemic, Japan extended multiple support, including timely vaccine support to prevent and control the COVID-19.

Nepal, South Africa Sign Declaration Of Intent On Cooperation

Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal and Acting Director General of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) of the Republic of South Africa Nonceba Losi signed the Declaration of Intent on Cooperation on behalf of their respective Governments in Pretoria.

Addressing the Signing Ceremony, Foreign Secretary Paudyal stated that the Declaration will provide a fundamental basis for further strengthening of bilateral cooperation between Nepal and South Africa.

The Foreign Secretary recalled Nepal's solidarity with the South African people in their struggle for freedom, dignity and equality. Acting Director General of DIRCO Losi warmly welcomed the Nepali delegation and stated that this day would mark the new beginning in the friendly relations between Nepal and South Af-



NEWSNOTES

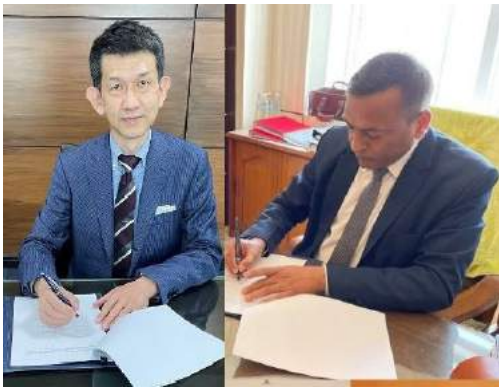
rica. She appreciated Nepal for firmly standing by the side of South African people in their fight against apartheid.

The signing ceremony was followed by the First Nepal-South Africa Bilateral Consultation meeting. The meeting discussed wide range of issues of bilateral relations between the two countries, including trade, tourism, foreign direct investment, people-to-people contacts, and cultural cooperation as well as exchange of UN peacekeeping experience. The second meeting of the bilateral consultation mechanism will be held in Kathmandu in 2024.

Foreign Secretary Paudyal also had a separate meeting with Deputy Minister for International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa Candith Mashego-Dlamini. Matters, including COVID-19 control, vaccine equity and economic recovery featured during the meeting.

JICA Starts Project To Improve Access To Clean And Safe Water In Biratnagar

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) signed a grant agreement with the Government of Ne-



pal in Kathmandu, to provide grant aid of up to 2.541 billion yen for “The Project for the Improvement of Water Supply in Biratnagar.”

The project intends to upgrade and

expand water supply facilities in the Biratnagar Metropolitan City contributing to the development of social and economic infrastructure.

Despite being the densely populated industrial city and the capital of Province 1, the city lacks adequate and potable water supply largely due to low quantity of water and dilapidated pipelines. The project envisions to ensure adequate access to safe water for around 100,000 people in Biratnagar City by constructing and upgrading facilities like water treatment plants, clear water reservoirs, distribution main pipelines to name a few.

In addition, serving as a countermeasure against infectious diseases, including COVID-19, this Project aims to contribute not only to the achievement of SDGs Goal 6 (clean water and sanitation) but also to Goal 3 (good health and well-being).

UNDP, ILO And IOM Enter Partnership With EU Funded Dakchyata

The European Union (EU) funded and British Council managed Dakchyata: TVET Practical Partnership project awards grants totalling EUR 1.99 million to UNDP (United

Nations Development Programme – NPR 117,623,000), ILO (International Labour Organisation Nepal – NPR 87,188,000) and IOM (International Organisation for Migration- NPR 59,711,953) through the European Union Practical Partnership Fund.

A c -
tivities under this grant scheme target trainers or trainees in three of the most important economic sectors in Nepal: Agriculture, Construction and Tourism, mobilizing support from employers and their associations.

The projects aim to generate evidence on future skills needs, promote the upskilling of migrant workers, and identify new opportunities for migrant returnees to successfully reintegrate into the labour market. Its purpose is to build competencies of stakeholders and support returnee migrant workers and their families who were affected by the pandemic, through identifying skills and reskilling demands for sustainable reintegration and/or safe labour migration.

All three project partners have strong track records in successful delivery in relevant sectors in Nepal, building on existing programming for rapid mobilization and start-up. These organizations are specialized in skills development, labour market, and migration support – including in areas of rights of migrants, social and economically reintegration of returning migrants, or skills training for decent jobs.

“The EU is proud to contribute to this action, which will create the basis for integrating returnee migrants in the Nepali labour force, with increased skills and better earning opportunities. This is a win-win for Nepal, and for the returnee migrants, by harnessing a strong workforce and providing dignified economic opportunities to migrants in their own communities” states Mrs Nona Deprez, the European Union’s Ambassador to Nepal

French Delegation Calls On PM Deuba And Speaker Sapkota

Visiting delegation of France-Nepal Parliamentary Friendship Group has paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba.



At the meeting held at the official residence of the Prime Minister at Baluwater, Kathmandu, the two sides discussed matters relating to the promotion of Nepal-France bilateral relations.

The three-member French delegation led by Group's chairperson Veronique Riotton arrived Nepal Tuesday on a five-day official visit. The delegation arrived here at the invitation of Nepal-France Parliamentary Friendship Group chairperson Madhav Kumar Nepal.

Vice-chairpersons of the visiting French delegation are Nicolas Forissier and Graziella Melchior.

On the occasion, PM Deuba lauded the support extended by France, a long-standing ally of Nepal, to Nepal's socioeconomic sector.

A delegation led by Véronique Riotton, President of the France-Nepal Parliamentary Friendship Group of the French House of Representatives, also paid a courtesy call on Speaker Agni Prasad Sapkota at the latter's office in Singha Durbar.

On the occasion, Speaker Sapkota said that the 73-year-old diplomatic relations between Nepal and France have been mutual and exemplary.

The delegation of France-Nepal Parliamentary Friendship Group led by Véronique Riotton called on Foreign Minister Dr. Khadka. According to a press release issued by Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the two sides exchanged views on various aspects of Nepal-France relations, cooperation and multilateral issues of common interest.

Similarly, the delegation also met leader of Communist Party Nepal (United Socialist) leader Madhav Kumar Nepal.

Forty Women Issue Kalapathhar Declaration Drawing Attention To Climate Change



A mission to Kalapathhar, a campaign for climate justice, concluded at Kalapathhar with a 10-point declaration.

A team comprising 40 women from different walks of life took on a 13-day trek beginning from Kathmandu to gather at Kalapathhar at an elevation of 5545 meters in the Mt

Everest region, for a special programme on the occasion of the International Women's Day (IWD) 2022.

The walk organised by "SaathSaathai", a civil society organisation aimed at advocating for climate change and drawing wider concern for its impacts, especially on the lives of women. It was supported by the Minister for Forest and Environment and other several local organisations.

The declaration calls for the best efforts to define the role of women in the climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts and for sustainable management of the human health system. The meet agreed to seek support and cooperation from the international community to make women of the mountain range capable of meeting challenges of climate change, drawing global concern in regard to climate change impact in the mountain and low-lying areas and the protection of the Mountain ecosystem largely vulnerable to climate



change effects.

The meet was held on the theme of 'Women United for Climate Change Justice.'

Kathmandu Based Diplomats Express Solidarity With Ukraine Denouncing Russian Invasion

Kathmandu based ambassadors and diplomats from various countries lit a lamp in Boudhanath Temple showing solidarity with people of Ukraine against Russian invasion wishing for establishment peace in Ukraine. Those participants include ambassadors, honorary consuls, monks and people from various countries.

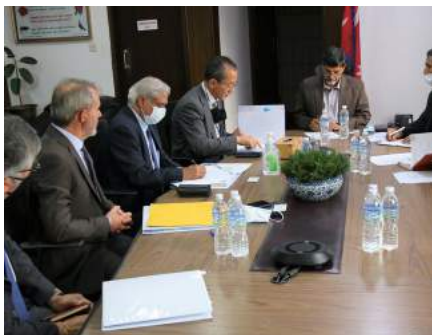
US Ambassador Randy Berry tweet, "Now more than ever, the international community is unified. We stand #UnitedWithUkraine and condemn Putin's reckless and brutal invasion."

Similarly, British Ambassador to Nepal Nicola Pollitt tweeted, "The diplomatic community in Nepal stood #UnitedWithUkraine beside Honorary Consul this evening at Boudhanath, our clear act of solidarity. #StopRussianAggression."

The US Embassy organized the program to mark the Gyalpo Losar, 2149.

BUSINESS BRIEF

ADB Is Aiming To Maintain \$500–\$600 Million In Concessional Resources Per Year In The Next 3 Years To Nepal: Kenichi Yokoyama



Asian Development Bank (ADB) Director-General for South Asia Kenichi Yokoyama said that ADB is aiming to maintain support, at \$500–\$600 million in concessional resources per year in the next 3 years, helping the government

with its vision of sustainable and more inclusive growth.

ADB's lending to Nepal increased from an annual average of around \$300 million during 2015–2017 to about \$600 million during 2018–2020.

He visited Nepal on 16–19 March. During his visit, Yokoyama reaffirmed ADB's continued strong support to the Government of Nepal's development agenda. He served as Country Director for Nepal from 2012 to 2017.

"I am very happy to be back in Kathmandu and to meet with senior government officials to discuss ADB operations in the country, our partnerships, and key strategic directions. ADB is committed to supporting Nepal in its green, resilient, and inclusive recovery from the pandemic to achieve high and sustainable economic growth, improve the lives of Nepali people and build resilience to climate change impact," said Mr. Yokoyama.

"The focus now should be on structural reforms and quality investments in infrastructure and human capital to further stimulate private sector investments, including foreign direct investments, while devolving services to the local level. These will raise productivity in agriculture, manufacturing, and services—prerequisites to achieving higher economic growth."

At his meeting with Nepal Finance Minister Janardan Sharma "Prabhakar", Yokoyama applauded the government's efforts to control the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and manage its impact on public health, welfare, and the economy, as well as progress in the vaccination program, with more than 80% of the target population receiving two doses. He sought the continued leadership of the Ministry to accelerate timely, efficient, and quality implementation of the development programs and reforms.

During his 4-day visit, Mr. Yokoyama also met with Minister of Culture, Tourism, and Civil Aviation Prem Bahadur Ale; Minister of Water Supply Umakanta Chaudhari; Minister of Urban Development Ram Kumari Jhakri; Minister of Energy, Water Resources, and Irrigation Pampha Bhusal; and Minister of Physical Infrastructure and Transport Renu Kumari Yadav. He also met with secretaries of these ministries and other senior government officials, project staff, and development partners.

Yokoyama also visited the ADB-supported Kathmandu Valley Wastewater Management Project site. The \$137 million projects is helping to modernize and expand the waste-

water treatment facilities and systems in the Kathmandu Valley.

ADB provided a concessional loan of \$250 million in May 2020 to the government for its COVID-19 pandemic response that focused on providing budgetary resources for containment and prevention, protection of economically vulnerable groups and providing relief to small businesses. ADB added a \$165 million concessional loan in July 2021 to help the government procure about 15.9 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines for about 6.8 million people.

Kiran Sakha Reelected President Of Nepal USA Chamber

Minister of Information and Communication Gyanendra Bahadur Karki inaugurated the 22nd Annual General Meeting of Nepal USA Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NUSACCI)/

Nepal USA Chamber of Commerce Nepal USA Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NUSACCI) reelected Kiran Sakha as its president and also elected a new executive committee. Eight executive members also elected unopposed including senior advocate Gandhi Pandit, Brindabanman Pradhanang and Birendra Rajkarnicar,

According to The U. S. Embassy Facebook homepage, Chargé d'Affaires Manny Micaller attended the annual general meeting of NUSACCI, a Nepali business association established

in 1995 and comprised of 80+ Nepali firms that seek to do business in the United States.



Micaller highlighted NUSACCI's support for the job-creating and economy-boosting Millennium Challenge Corporation - MCC Compact at a time when there was an inundation of disinformation and misinformation against it. Micaller commended NUSACCI's principled stance which showcased corporate responsibility.

He noted American companies such as Visa, Coca-Cola, Starbucks, McDonald's, Goldman Sachs, and others were demonstrating the importance of global social responsibility. Within the last month, those American companies closed locations or paused their operations in Russia in support of the Ukrainian people.

Nepal, ADB Review Projects

Nepal and ADB Conduct a Joint Review of Projects to Improve Implementation and Timely Delivery of Development Results

The Government of Nepal and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) conducted a 2-day country portfolio review meeting to assess the progress and proactively address issues of ADB-supported development projects in Nepal for timely delivery of development results.

Nepal Finance Minister Janardan Sharma "Prabhakar" and ADB Country Director for Nepal Arnaud Cauchois



BUSINESS BRIEF

jointly chaired a session on sector and project performance, attended by Secretaries of the Government of Nepal, senior officials, project directors, and staff from

than 200 partner institutions through investment and advisory support.

“Martin’s background experience will be invaluable as IFC deepens its work in Nepal, Bangladesh, and Bhutan,” said Hector Gomez Ang, IFC’s Regional Director for South Asia. “This is a time of new challenges and opportunities and I am confident Martin will be successful in leading IFC’s efforts to strengthen and diversify its work in the three countries in support of a green and resilient recovery.”

Holtmann will notably work to promote IFC’s impact on climate, gender, and green growth, while expanding and diversifying the investment and advisory portfolios. Some key sectors for future growth opportunities in the region include transport and logistics, clean energy, financial services, tourism, agribusiness, healthcare, housing, and the digital economy.

Commenting on his new role, Holtmann said, “I am very pleased to be working in Nepal, Bangladesh, and Bhutan. These countries have shown remarkable resilience in the face of strong economic headwinds and fiscal pressures, and I look forward to redoubling IFC’s efforts to help create markets and promote sustainable development.”

Holtmann is a graduate of the Lester B. Pearson United World College of the Pacific, Canada and holds two master’s degrees in Economics from Trier University, Germany and in Public Administration from Harvard University, United States. He succeeds Wendy Werner, who has taken on a new role as IFC’s Country Head in India, after successfully serving as the Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal Country Manager for six years.

ADB’s Nepal Resident Mission.

“We appreciate the leadership of the Ministry of Finance to identify and address risks and constraints to improving project implementation through regular country portfolio review meetings, with active participation of line ministries and relevant agencies,” said Cauchois.

ADB’s operations in Nepal is growing and as of end 2021, ADB’s active portfolio to the country stands at around \$3.4 billion with 30 investment projects. Last year, ADB committed \$255 million—including \$165 million for vaccine loan. ADB expects to commit more than \$932 million in 2022 depending on readiness that can be achieved under the 9-pipeline project/programs being considered for signing this year.

“Higher lending needs to be matched with good project performance to ensure tangible development results on the ground. We fully understand the challenges faced by the project teams because of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and appreciate their efforts in project implementation despite the challenges. Moving forward, we hope the specific actions agreed during the review mission will ensure timely project completion,” said Cauchois.

ADB disbursed \$272.9 million in 2021, which is higher compared to the same period the previous year. Of the net available funding amount of \$3.4 billion for 30 investment projects, 66% have been contracted out and 42% have been disbursed as of 31 December 2021. The contract award achievement was \$431.5 million, which showed improvement compared to the same period in 2020.

Martin Holtmann Named IFC’s Country Manager Based In Dhaka

With a Focus on Green and Resilient Growth, IFC Appoints Martin Holtmann as Country Manager for Nepal, Bangladesh, and Bhutan

IFC has appointed Martin Holtmann as the new Country Manager for Nepal, Bangladesh, and Bhutan. Based in Dhaka, Holtmann will focus on developing new opportunities for the private sector and increasing IFC’s impact on the development of the three countries as the region continues to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Holtmann, a German national, joined IFC in 2007. Prior to his appointment, Holtmann was Global Sector Manager for Financial Inclusion, helping IFC to reach millions

of micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) with traditional and digital financial services and strengthen more

succeeded in breaking the glass ceiling. Sharing and rejoicing the stories of such empowering women has undoubtedly made a difference in society and served as an immense source of encouragement to all the women in the country.

Prastuti Bhattarai and Barsha

Tamang were honored with Princess Helen Shah Award, Captain Priya Adhikari with Amar Rana Game Changer Award and Suswopna Rimal with Ratna Devi Award to Covid Heroes.

Barsha Katuwal received the Women in Business Scholarship and Sukriti Maskey received the Women in Tech Scholarship under Jyoti Scholarship Award.

Similarly, Mandira Shrestha and Manisha Dawa received Young Women in Public Affairs in Women in Space under Indrakala Scholarship Award respectively.

Zonta Club Kathmandu Honors 12 Exemplary Women

Zonta Club of Kathmandu honored twelve inspirational and courageous women for their achievements regardless of their circumstances on the occasion of the International Women’s Day annual “Yellow Rose Day” on March 6.

The award ceremony was supported by NABIL Bank, Byanjan, and a premium food brand, Star Hospital Limited, MG Motors, and Hyatt Palace as hospitality partners.

The awardees shared their journeys of how they



POLITICS

Eye On Polls

After closing the winter session of House of Representatives, Nepal's political parties are eyeing for local polls

By A CORRESPONDENT

As soon as President Biddi Devi Bhandari prorogued the ongoing winter session of the Federal Parliament (House of Representatives and National Assembly), all major political parties have announced countrywide programs aimed to campaign for the local polls.



Along with main opposition CPN-UML, Nepali Congress has also launched a door to door campaign to woo the voters. Although it is yet to be announced formally, ruling five parties are proposing to contest elections in alliance and defeat CPN-UML.

As the country is preparing for fresh local level elections scheduled for upcoming May 13, the Prime Minister, also NC President, said it would participate in the elections by coordinating with other political parties in the coalition government.

“We see a high possibility of a victory in the entire three-level elections if the existing alliance takes part in the election collectively and discussions to this regard are going on.”

“Its date will be fixed after it is published in the weekly notice and hearing,” he said, adding, “It is determined by when, which day, and what kinds of cases are heard.”

Backing PM Deuba’s call,

CPN (Unified Socialist) Chair Madhav Kumar Nepal has said people will be assessing the regressive forces in upcoming elections.

In his address to a reception organized by the party, former Prime Minister Nepal was confident that the parties contributing to the promotion

of democracy and constitution would be rewarded by the people in the upcoming local level elections slated for May 13. “Regressive and arrogant people will be tested through the elections and

will face a defeat.

Not only PM Deuba and Nepal, Chairperson of the CPN (Maoist Centre), Pushpa Kamal Dahal ‘Prachanda’ has urged party cadres not to make any activities to break the alliance. He requested the cadres to make the party organization stronger in the election and to win the hearts of the people with their own strength.

Asking the cadres to get involved in election preparation making an alliance in election as the first priority and getting maximum results the second priority, he urged not to cast doubt regarding the election.

However, he made it clear that his party will not joint with CPN-UML. “We are presently in an alliance. Hence, there is no possibility of an immediate alliance with the CPN (UML).”

Similarly, senior leader Narayankaji Shrestha said that the dispute that surfaced due to MCC has

already been resolved and the alliance has been moving ahead in the election campaign with unity.

As the Nepali Congress (NC) has been launching a month-long election campaign to prepare for the upcoming local elections on May 13, main opposition party CPN-UML has also been heading with a nationwide campaign.

CPN-UML leader KP Oli Sharma has directed his party cadres to work to sweep the elections. “Our party will win two thirds majority and wipe out this unconstitutional alliance,” thundered Oli in a program organized in Pokhara.

In his election tour, Oli has been visiting different places and addressing the election campaigns. Holding over 60 percent seats in local level, CPN-UML has a strong base. Despite breaking alliance with Maoist-Center, CPN-UML wants to repeat its past performance.

Nepal Congress is also holding big rallies in a month long campaign. The aim of the campaign is to increase the harmony, unity and energy within the party up to the ward and tole level to win the local elections, said NC spokesperson Dr Prakash Sharan Mahat.

As the local poll is approaching closer, political parties have been intensifying their activities reaching to the people. With no main agenda on their hand, they are yet to create any wave.

At a time when people in Kathmandu Valley are desperately waiting for drinking water, common people are spending days to get passport and other related things, none of the leaders have shown any commitment on addressing them.

KATHMANDU-TERAI EXPRESSWAY

Work In Progress

Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Prabhuram Sharma and Defense Secretary Kiran Raj Sharma inspected Kathmandu-Terai/ Madhesh Expressway Project

By A CORRESPONDENT

If the existing pace of work continues, Kathmandu-Terai/ Madhesh Expressway Project will Complete by 2080/81 and Nepal will see a new chapter in its history of roads.

At a time when Covid-19 has disrupted construction works, CoAS General Sharma has directed the contractors, consultants and project officials to complete the contract for the construction of the two-package tunnel under the Kathmandu-Terai/Madhesh Expressway Project at the stipulated cost and time.

Conducting a field visit of the Expressway project with and Defence Secretary Kiran Raj Sharma, General Sharma and secretary Sharma have inquired about the progress of the work road at Makhubeshi, Sisneri, Mahadevtar, Lendanda and Budune Ranisera.

During the inspection visit, the senior officials issued instructions to complete the under-construction work of Mahadevtar Tunnel Section (Package 1) and Lendanda-Dhedre Tunnel Section (Package 2) within the stipulated time (2080/81 B.S.) and cost as per the contract agreement.

They have also instructed the contractors, consultants and project officials to make arrangements to work in double shift as per the need by mobilizing maximum manpower and machinery.

CoAS General Sharma also instructed the officials to brief the



local communities about the benefits of the project to the community directly and indirectly around the expressway.

The inspection team was accompanied by other general officers, officials from the Defence Ministry and other stakeholders, according to the Directorate of Public Relations and Information of the Army Headquarters.

CoAS Sharma and Secretary Sharma directed the project head and international consultant to continuously monitor and regulate the project by making arrangements for verification of the quality of construction materials and construction work by arranging accurate lab tests at specific locations to maintain the quality of construction.

According to the Directo-

rate of Public Relations and Information, Nepal Army, CoAS General Sharma and secretary Sharma visited various sites of the project.

With the start of the construction of tunnel, the project will likely to make progress. By mobilizing national contractor, Nepal Army has been doing the earthen work in various parts of the road.

The completion of the project is likely to be a major economic breakthrough to the country. As CoAS General Sharma and secretary Sharma visited the site and directed for early completion, the pace of construction will likely to accelerate further.

TRISHULI 3 B HYDROPOWER PROJECT

On High Gear

Despite facing frequent disruptions caused by Covid-19 pandemic and restrictions, including lockdown and supply constraints due to border closure in Kerung, the 37-MW Upper Trishuli 3B Hydro Electricity Project (UT3BHEP) has made several breakthroughs recently. Thanks to the uninterrupted efforts of Mohan Prasad Gautam, Managing Director, Trishuli Jal Vidyut Company Ltd (TJCVL, the project has accelerated its construction pace. As the board of directors visited the site with MD Gautam, they saw the work going on in full swing. That means the project is on track towards its aim of generating electricity by September 2023

By KESHAB POUDEL

Several development projects have suffered badly with the spread of COVID-19 and nationwide lockdown but Trishuli 3 B, though in slow pace, has rarely stopped the work. Along with Covid-19, the project work was also delayed due to disruption of supply of equipment from Kerung and China.

With the return of Kul Man Ghising as Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority and Chairman of Trishuli Jal Vidyut

Company Limited a year back, the construction work in UT3BHEP has accelerated further.

Along with Ananda Dhungel, Project manager UT3BHEP, Board of Director of TJCVL from Nepal Doorsanchar Company Limited Aananta Man Singh Pradhan, Sangita Pahadee, Rajendra Pradhan and Madan Timsina, DMD from NEA, also visited the site taking the note of progress. Among six board of directors, chairman of TJCVL Kul Man

Ghising, MD Gautam and DMD of Nepal Madan Timsina represent NEA.

Following his reappointment as MD at NEA, Ghising has given high priority to Trishuli 3 B project and backed MD Gautam. That has led the pace of work in Trishuli 3 B to accelerate in high gear.

With MD Ghising's leadership, TJVCL, jointly formed by Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) and Nepal Doorsanchar Company



Limited (NDCL), has handled all the works, financial closure, including the debt portion required for the project, contract agreement and launching of construction, successfully.

With proper guidance and committed management, the project has now achieved every target completing over 57 percent work by the first week March 2022 targeting to complete the project by 2023 September.

Led by Managing Director Gautam, who had a long experience working in the construction of projects, including 456 MW Upper Tamakosi and establishing Dudhkosi Storage Hydropower Project, Trishuli Jal Vidhyut Company Limited has begun construction work removing all hurdles to prevent delay in the project.

With complete backing from NEA's management and the

Minister of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, MD Gautam and his team have quite efficiently handled all the processes of construction of UT3BHEP.

With tireless effort of MD Gautam, who prefers to work quietly, UT3BHEP is now back on the track. Given the present pace, the project will complete on the stipulated date.

With technical capacity and managerial experience in place, Gautam's plan of the project perfectly worked before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The management now wants the same to repeat.

Commenced on 14 March 2018 with a target to complete by 13 March 2021, over 40 percent of work has completed till the first week of January or upsurge of Covid-19 Pandemic. However, everything had collapsed within a matter of a month.

Progress

Despite facing severe crisis of Covid-19 pandemic followed by health protocols and lockdown, 37 MW Upper Trishuli 3 B Hydropower Project has made a progress completing 58 percent of work.

MD Gautam said that 2865 metres of the main tunnel with a length of 3805 meters has been dug.

"Concreting of structures has started after completion of excavation of surface power house; work is being done with the aim of concreting the first phase by connecting electromechanical equipment and parts by next May," said Gautam.

"As the customs checkpoints with China have not been fully opened yet, the contractor company has not been able to transport the construction equipment and materials in the production and packaging stage to China and bring them to the construction site. We have received



information that they will be released from the customs soon.”

A cascade project of 60 MW Upper Trishuli 3A Hydropower Project, the Upper Trishuli 3B will not have to build dams, sand thawing ponds and other structures. The gate required to send the water released from the Upper Trishuli 3A power house to the tunnel of the project has been connected.

Work on the 37 MW Upper Trishuli 3B Hydropower Project under construction in Rasuwa and Nuwakot as a part of the People's Hydropower Program has gained momentum.

The overall physical construction progress of the Upper Trishuli 3B Hydropower Project, which had been hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, has reached 58 per cent so

far, according to the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA).

As per the People's Hydropower Program (Operation and Management) Procedure, 2075, there is a provision to demand payment only after paying 50 per cent of the remaining amount for physical progress of the project and all the amount agreed to be taken by the shareholders of the founding group of the company.

“As the provisions in the working procedure have been completed, the shareholders will be called soon to collect the remaining Rs. 90 per share and other shares in the general public group will also be expedited,” said Gautam.

NEA and Nepal Telecom have 30/30 per cent founder shares in Trishuli Hydropower Company

Limited, the promoter of the project.

The company will have 5 per cent share of Rasuwa and Nuwakot rural municipality and municipality, 5 per cent of Rasuwa and Nuwakot local financial institutions, 10 per cent of Rasuwa and Nuwakot residents, 15 per cent of public and 5 per cent of NEA and Telecom employees.

Estimated construction cost of the project is Rs. 7.44 billion.

The construction of the project, which was in full swing, was halted for about 15 months as Chinese workers, who had gone home in the second week of January 2020 to celebrate the New Year, could not return due to COVID-19 and equipment and materials could not be brought from China.

The construction of the pro-



ject was resumed only from April 2021, but the work was again affected for about three weeks due to the second and third wave of COVID-19.

Also, construction was affected by the discovery of a much weaker rock than previously estimated in the main tunnel. Contractor Chinese company Shuifa ANHE Group Co. Ltd. is currently constructing main structures, including intake, main tunnel and power house.

The contract agreement was signed with Shuifa ANHE Group Company on February 12, 2018 for the construction of the project in Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) model. The contractor company will design, construct, connect and operate all the civil, electromechanical and hydromechanical side structures and equipment of the project.

The electricity generated will be transmitted to the national grid through the existing Samundartar Trishuli 3B transmission line.

Quick collection of remaining amount for shares The promoter of the project, Trishuli Hydropower Company Limited, will soon collect the remaining amount for the shares issued under the People's Hydropower Program.

The company had issued

3.7 million shares to the public and collected only Rs. 10 per share with a minimum face value of Rs. 100.

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Trishuli 3 B project Site

The period from November to the first week of June is regarded as the best time to achieve progress in the civil and other surface construction work because of favorable weather. Following the onset of monsoon in June, progress will be slowed down naturally. However, the disruption started after January till now has pushed everything behind. Given the present scenario, there might be a delay of 6-8 months in completing the Project.

"Although the construction

of the project was going on smoothly till the 3rd week of January 2020, the COVID-19 has changed the status of the project," said MD Gautam.

Estimated construction cost of the project is Rs. 7.44 billion. The completion of UT3BHPP will help to maintain quality of electricity supply



in the Kathmandu Valley.

NEA's MD Ghising is making efforts to shorten the period of delay. In his effort, MD Ghising has started to facilitate the work to bring the equipment and materials lying in Keirung.

With his own experiences and backing of NEA and top management, MD Gautam is now pushing the contractors to make tangible progress to complete it.

Salient Feature

SALIENT FEATURES OF UPPER TRISHULI 3B HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

General

Location: -Kispang Rural Municipality (Nuwakot), Uttargaya Rural Municipality (Rasuwa)

Type of Scheme: - Run-of-River (Cascade of Upper Trishuli 3A Hydroelectric Project)

Gross Head: - 90 m

Installed Capacity: -37 MW

Average Annual Energy after Outage: 292.58GWh/year

Dry Season:- 134.88 GWh/ year

Wet Season:- 157.70 GWh/year

Penstock

Length: - 185.33m

Diameter: - 4.2m

Thickness: - 18 mm

Hydrology

Catchment Area: - 4577 km²

Design Discharge (at 70 % PoE): - 51 m³/sec

Powerhouse

Type: - Surface

Size (L X BXH): - 40.4 m x 19.30m x 33.81 m

Head Pond (Connected to UT3A Tailrace Pond)

Size: 29(L) x 5.2 to 11.0(B)x 7.35 to 14.8 (H)

Lowest Bed Level: - 714.20 m

Intake: - Bell Mouth Type

Tailrace Conduit

Type: - RCC

Length :- 180m (5.323 m (B) x 3.6 m (H))

Approach Pressure Conduit

Type: - Box Culvert

Length: -243.47 m + 40 m

Size: - 5.1m x 5.1m Square and 5.1 m diameter

Turbine

Type: - Vertical Axis Francis

Capacity: - 2X19.715MW

Headrace Tunnel

Shape: - Horseshoe

Length: - 3805.48m

Diameter: - 5.1m ~ 6.1 m

Generator

Type: - 3 Phase Synchronous

Capacity :- 2 X 22.7045MVA

Adit Tunnel

Shape: - Inverted D

Length of Adit 1: - 463.3 m, Diameter: - 4.0m +1.5 m

Length of Adit 2: 119.17m Diameter: -5.95 m ~ 6.1 m

Transformer

Type: - 3 Phase Oil Immersed Outdoor ONAN

Capacity: - 2X 23 MVA

Voltage Ratio:- 11 kV /132 kV

Surge Tank

Type: - Restricted Orifice

Diameter: - 15.0 m

Height: - 39.3 m

Transmission Line

Voltage Level:- 132 kV, Double Circuit (3 km)

Construction Period: -1095 Days from Commencement Date

Commencement Date: - 14 March, 2018

MELAMCHI WATER SUPPLY

Certainly Uncertain

Given the looming uncertainty over the restoration of project by mid-April, Minister for Water Supply visited the project site

By A CORRESPONDENT

Even as the work on removal of the deposition of materials and landslide debris at Melamchi Project has seen 70 percent progress so far, project officials are expressing doubt over bringing water into the pipes by Mid-April. Amidst the doubts, Minister for Water Supply Umakanta Chaudhary paid an inspection visit to the project site on March 16.

According to the project, the removal of sediment piled up at Ambathan would take a bit longer as the sediment has been amassed in a huge quantity. The official argues that the resumption of the water supply will depend upon the conditions of the gates of the tunnels in Ambathan.

"If tunnel gates from Gyalthun to Ambathan have not been damaged badly, there is a possibility to bring the water in Mid-April. If the gates were damaged completely, the water supply may be delayed for another five to six months due to the procedure, import and their installation process," Rajendra Prasad Panta, information officer of Melamchi Water Drinking Water Development Board, told BBC Nepali Service. "Although we may be able to complete the renovation work by the first week of May, we may not be able to supply water due to the onset of monsoon."

"As the gate in Ambathan is buried by debris, we are unable to open it. Only after opening the gate, we can say for sure about bringing the water to Kathmandu by April. We have been doing the maintenance of headwork and gate."

"We have already removed the debris in gate no 1 and gate no 9 using explosives. There are also some problems with gate no 38. If we restore gate no 38, we may be able to bring the water to Kathmandu through this alternative tunnel."

"The current problem is the

accumulation of almost 20 meters of flood debris. We have been cleaning it at the headwork site. During the process, the contractor found big boulders. It is a very narrow place and we are unable to use many equipment."

"Now we are clearing the debris deposited in the Ambathan tunnel opening gates number 1, 9, 38 and other gates inside. The temporary revival of the project will depend on the state of the gate. If the gates are ready just after doing simple maintenance, we will be able to restore the water supply by mid-April. If they cannot work and need a new one, we will not be in a position to divert water to Kathmandu by mid-April. In such a situation, we need to order new gates from the manufacturer and it will delay the project by a few more months," Panta told BBC Nepali Service.

During his visit, the Minister instructed all agencies concerned to work in such a manner that Melamchi Project's water could be supplied to Kathmandu Valley within mid-April this year.

Minister Chaudhary, who reached Ambathan, the source of the Melamchi Drinking Water Project via Sundarijal Tunnel, pledged additional technical assistance and human resources for the project if need be.

During the inspection, the Minister assured that the government was ready to make pending payment on time but there should not be any delay in the project work under any pretext.



According to him, the Ministry for Water Supply, Melamchi Drinking Water Development Committee and stakeholder government agencies were positive about the demands of affected locals and flood survivors.

Similarly, senior divisional engineer Padam Bahadur Kunwar informed that the removal of sediment piled up at Ambathan would take a bit longer as he said sediment has been amassed in a huge quantity. Removal of the deposition of materials and landslide debris has so far achieved 70 percent progress.

According to him, they were working to ensure the re-distribution of Melamchi's water to Kathmandu Valley within mid-April. Likewise, Helambu rural municipality chairperson Nima Gyalzen Sherpa urged the government to increase the amount from the existing Rs 500,000 to flood survivors to rebuild their houses.

The project, upon implementation, had begun supplying water to Kathmandu Valley. The flood and landslide in the last monsoon caused severe damage to some parts of the Project, impeding the supply of targeted 170 million liters of water per day to the Valley.

EARLY WARNING SYSTEM IN HYDROPOWER

Making A Difference

A recently conducted pilot study on Flood Early Warning System in Hydropower shows that installation of an Early Warning System (EWS) prevents loss of life, property and destruction of hydropower projects in Nepal. With funding from Tayar Project of USAID, Urja Engineering And Management Solutions and Independent Power Producers' Association Nepal (IPPAN) in a close collaboration with Local Levels and communities in Mai Beni Hydropower Project, the study conducted in the area show that EWS is a prerequisite of river basin given the current extreme weather pattern

By A CORRESPONDENT

Although it has not damaged any hydropower projects in Mai River basin in Ilam, the flood caused by unusual rain fall last September had caused a loss to the life and property along the Mai river basin.

As a most vulnerable of countries in terms of climate change, Nepal needs to prepare for future hazardous floods and rainfall which will likely damage infrastructure including hydropower projects of river basins.

Experts argue that the most important climate change effects impacting future hydropower generation are likely to be earlier snow-melt, change of runoff seasonality, and increasing frequency of extreme high- and low-runoff events. They said that climate change was going to create major problems for hydro-

power projects in Nepal including Mai river basin.

Given such a situation, the installation of Early Warning System along the river basin and circulating the information is a key to prevent damage and manage the risk.

This is what policy makers, power producers and experts expressed in Information Sharing Workshop on Flood Early Warning System in Hydropower.

Participated by the key stakeholders from the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) sector, high officials from Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, Department of Hydrology and Meteorology, Department of Energy Development, National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Authority (NDRR-MA), USAID, DP-Net, Ilam Mu-

nicipality, Mai Jogmai Rural Municipality, power producers, the half day seminar discussed on different aspects of a year-long project

Under the pilot project titled Development of a Collaborative Disaster Risk Reduction Mechanism for Hydropower Projects and Communities through EWS installation: A Pilot Project in Mai Beni Hydropower Project (9.5L MW), the study group conducted various aspects of floods and risk management, early warning system and role of central government, local government, communities and power producers.

As extreme rain patterns and GLOFs have already started to create havoc in river basin, the study reports published in the right time will make policy makers and other stake holders more aware.

Inaugurated by Minister of



Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation Pampha Bhushal, the participants agreed with the study that the installation of early warning system in the river basin with close collaboration with local level and communities will be key to reduce the risk.

Implications on Policy

“Climate change risk management has gradually been a challenge for Nepal. The latest incidences in the country suggest the growing risk of climate change impact,” said Minister Bhushal.

“Rivers and low-lying settlements in the country seem more vulnerable to climate change impact. We have records of devastating losses from incidences of landslides and floods. The hydropower sector is among the hardest-hit ones by the consequences of natural disasters. We believe the scale of climate change impact is further increasing

and countries most responsible for greenhouse gas emissions should ensure compensation to the nations having no contribution to or a minimal role to heating the planet,” said minister.

Speaking about possible consequences from a lack of safe hydropower projects and their implications on the nation’s economy, the Minister pledged that the Ministry would act for drafting required policies and guidelines and cooperating with several bodies for the climate change risk mitigation in hydropower projects.

She went on to say that this year, the country witnessed the off-season rains and their consequences that might have been caused by the climate change impact.

“We continue to work to come up with required policies, rules and build an atmosphere for promot-

ing the domestic consumption of power produced at home and exporting to India,” said minister Bhushal.

As Nepal is endowed with high potential of water resources with 170 billion m3 annual runoff and 45,610 MW feasible hydroelectricity generations, formulation of mitigation and risk reduction strategy is a prerequisite.

Similarly, Nepal’s water resources covering 395,000 ha (48%) area within 45,000 km in length of 6000 rivers also cover vast areas of human settlement. Thus, the EWS system can make a lot of difference to prevent or reduce the risk of floods.

“Despite a pilot project, the outcome of the study is highly important for future policy formulation in disaster risk and reduction process. The study proves that EWS can significantly reduce the loss



and damage of human settlement and hydropower projects,” said Anil Pokharel, CEO National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Authority (NDRRMA). “This pilot project has also shown that the collaboration between the local levels, community, IPPS is necessary to make EWS functional and effective. NDRRMA can use this in future policy formulation.”

Since 1911, 500 kW power generations at Pharping, Nepal’s capacity has now reached around 2000 MW. Nepal government has planned to increase its current access in electricity by increasing the generation 10000 MW by 2030, more hydropower projects are now in pipeline in different basin.

“The government has issued over 7000 licenses to private investors’ capacity to generate 600 MW. Nepal Electricity Authority has

already signed PPA to purchase 6000 MW and other hydropower projects with capacity of 4000 MW are waiting for PPA,” said Bhanu Pokharel, managing director Urja Developers. “In this context, institutionalization of EWS process is key. This pilot study has revealed so many important benefits of EWS in prevention of disaster and minimizing the damage.”

As Hydropower is considered as a renewable clean energy, there is the need to construct dam to store water. This means the fluctuation of discharge of water in the rivers will have significant impacts.

The recent trends of fluctuation of water levels in the river particularly during the rainy season put all hydropower projects under high risk area. Thus the information sharing between upstream and downstream is necessary to monitor

the level of water.

“Risk of floods and other natural disaster has greatly increased recently to the hydropower plants. Constructed with the huge investment, the government should provide us support to reduce the risk. In the last decades, IPPs like Upper Bhotekoshi and other smaller projects have already faced huge damage due to floods,” said Ashish Garg, vice president of IPPAN.

There must be communication channels between the project and community lying in the upstream and downstream. “As one of the objectives of the study was to install EWS and establish the close collaboration among local levels, local community and hydropower developers to reduce the damage to zero, this pilot study can be a game changer,” said Mohan Das Manandhar, Tayar advisor and expert direc-



tor Urja Engineering and Management Solutions and urja developer. “During the course of pilot project, what we came to know is that there is no close link between risk reduction management and hydropower. In this sector the role of Department of Hydrology and Meteorology (DoHM) is highly important. By establishing metrological and hydrological stations and closely collaborating with hydropower developers and local level, it can make a difference. NDRRMA, IPPAN and the Ministry need to play more effective roles.”

“As the flood and landslides have been affecting hydropower projects and community living around it, this is a pilot study to analyze its implications. This can make model for other basin areas as well,” said Tirtha Raj Joshi, USAID representative.

Nepal’s topography offered more RoR types of hydropower and has more risk of landslide; flooding, GLOFs, LDOFs, and flash floods, there should be an effective institutionalized tool for disaster risk reduction. The study suggests that establishment of EWS can help to prevent the damage.

Collaboration of local level

Although Nepal has been

practicing the EWS system for a long time, it is yet to show effectiveness. The pilot project has suggested the need to have close collaboration between local levels, local community, federal government and power produces in the EWS mechanism.

Ilam’s pilot project suggested that during the course of information sharing between upper stream and down streams, the local community’s involvement is the key. The community can play important role in timely sharing of information about the rainfall and levels of water in upstream with down streams.

“Ilam Municipality is happy to be a part of this pilot project. Establishing hydrological and rainfall stations in different parts of the Mai river and sharing information on it can reduce the risk,” said Mahesh Basnet, Mayor of Ilam Municipality. “EWS is all about the effective collaboration mechanism of information sharing with the involvement of all the stake holders to minimize the damage.”

Ilam Municipality is ready to work with all the stake holders

including hydropower producer. Chairperson of Mai Jog Mai Rural Municipality Jeet Bahadur Rai also holds the view that close collaboration between the hydropower developers and community is necessary to make EWS effective.

“There are over dozens of hydropower projects in the Mai river with dams to reserve the water. The information about the flow of water level is key for hydropower to prevent the damage during the rainy season. They can secure all necessary information only through the support of concerned communities and local level,” said Chairperson Rai.

Discussion On EWS

Moderated by Purushotam Ghimire, a governance expert, the event heard the participants describing the importance of EWS on the basis of information shared by the Pilot Project and proposed community based information sharing system. “Based on our discussion with local level representatives, community leaders and hydropower promoters, we have proposed to model



for EWS. One for Mai Flood Early Warning System, Information Mechanism for EWS for Ilam Municipality and Information Mechanism for EWS for Majog Mai Rural Municipality,” said Ghimire.

“The information sharing mechanism of Ilam and Mai Jog Mai Rural Municipality is now operational,” said Ghimire. “Developed involving all different stake holders



of the Ilam district, this will work at the time of risk.”

At a time when Nepal has focused on renewable energy, hydropower production, targeting 12000 MW by 2030 to fulfill its growing demand of 11,500 MW, many hydropower projects are under construction in different river basins. In this regard, sharing information on the water level, rain pattern is key to prevent the damage of big infrastructure.

As a sole government agency responsible for information sharing of weather pattern, rainfall and flood, Department of Hydrology and Meteorology (DoHM) has to play a greater role.

“The Department is ready to work with all stake holders to make our EWS more effective. Instead of talking about the single unit, there is the need to work in integrated manner for effective sharing of information and preventing the risk of hazard,” said Kamal GC, Director General of DoHM. “We have built several numbers of hydrological and meteorological stations in Mai river basin. Due to lack of coordination between power developers and DoHM, these stations are unable to share the information at the time of flood.”

Nepal is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change, water-induced disasters and hydro-meteorological extreme events such as droughts, storms, floods, inundation, landslides, debris flow, soil erosion, and avalanches.

According to a report, 22 districts are highly vulnerable in terms of landslide-prone areas, 12 districts to GLOF, and 9 for flooding. National communication report 2015 described an increasing trend of climate change from the energy sector. In the case of hydropower, the model projected lower dry season flows and thus lower energy availability.

As the economic costs of climate change in hydropower, agriculture, and water-induced disasters could be 2–3% of current GDP/year by midcentury, Nepal needs to be prepared to make effective early warning system.

Mai Khola basin study has shown that Nepal’s hydropower plants are highly vulnerable to the projected impacts of climate change. Whether the river basins fed by glacial melt water or rain based, the extreme weather patterns significantly increase the flood and disaster.

“At a time when the extreme weather pattern has been mak-

ing the overall climate unpredictable with more floods, establishing Metrological and hydrological units with mobilizing the community and local level is best way to issue early warning and minimize risk,” said Dr. Ram Prasad Dhital, former executive director of Alternative Energy Promotion Center.

Promoter of Sanima Hydropower operator of Mai Khola Hydro Power Subarna Das Shrestha said that they have faced several crises in the last 20 years in the journey. “Our 3 MW plants in Sunkosi had been destroyed by flood. Having the experiences of Sunkosi, we have been collaborating with community, local level to make EWS mechanism effective.”

Executive Director of Water and Energy Commission Sarju Vaidya, former director general of DoHM, said that Nepal has now capacity to forecast the weather correctly. “We have now effective mechanism for flood and weather forecasting what is required is the coordination and cooperation among the stake holders including IPPS.

As most climate models predict significant changes in the dynamics of mountain glaciers, snow-melt, and precipitation as the climate warms, the directive produced by the project is valuable.

Holi Festival In Kathmandu



BY: FANNY JONCKEAU

Nepal witnessed a very special day yesterday. On Thursday 17th, March 2022, the Holi festival was celebrated in Kathmandu. Children had been celebrating since the week before, and some people will continue to do so today as well. But yesterday, you could find colorful people from Thamel to Patan, from Kathmandu Durbar Square to Bhaktapur and all around the streets. Over 1500 police officers had been deployed to cover the celebrations, known to go wild sometimes. After the last two years of a “covid-ed” festival, people were more than happy to let loose for the day and enjoy each other company.

The Holi Festival or “Phagu Purnima” is considered to be a farewell to winter and a welcoming of spring and summer. It is the festival of friendship, love, and colors. Different stories or variations of stories exist regarding Holi, but the most common one is the story of Holika. King Hiranyakashipu would not allow people to worship Vishnu, but his son Prahlada opposed him with his devotion to the Lord Vishnu. Because of that, his father and his sister (Holika) tried to kill him by fire. Indeed, Holika (Pralada’s sister, a demon) was supposed to be indifferent to fire and so she took her brother on her knees and went into the flames. However, Lord Vishnu blessed Prahlada for his loyalty and Holika died in the fire while her brother survived. This is why Holi is the celebration of the victory of the good against evil. It allows us to remember that there is always hope to those who never lose faith, may that be in deities, life, people or whatever you choose to believe in. The various meanings and interpretations behind Holi make it even more joyful because it feels like a common story is written again every year, full of brightness and glee.

During Holi in Kathmandu’s Valley, most of the stores are closed and their managers are off to have a good time. This year, music, dancing and singing could be found around Thamel or in Durbar Square as well with crowds of hundreds of people spreading colors on each other’s face. Some were selling packs of colored powder in the streets, some others were throwing water balloons from their windows

and some would even flood the street from their rooftop with their garden hose. That is to say, you had no chance of staying clean and anyway, the dirtier you were, the better it was! People of every age, every cast, and every country gather around the desire to share a peaceful, joyful day. The magnificence and the multitude of colors unite people more than nationality ever could. You are drowning in a life without worries, even for just a few precious moments. You hear French, Nepali, English, Danish, and Spanish all over the streets, yet the universal language is the smiles you give and are given all day long. Suddenly, Kathmandu is covered not with gases, but with clouds of purple, yellow, blue, with rainbow clouds that delight bystanders. Holi is really the time to dance with strangers as if they were longtime friends, to gather in a group of foreigners and wander the festivities together, to be equal with each and every person you see for they will be as smeared with colors and joy as you are.



There are, however, several downsides to this great festival that need to be mentioned and, hopefully, resolved soon. Firstly, it is honestly an environmental disaster with the plastic balloons exploding all around the streets plus the chemicals in the colors that will undoubtedly end up in the river. Moreover, it brings up a health issue, with the colors, as chemicals can damage your skin and your general health. Holi used to be celebrated with colors extracted from flowers and

herbs and they were used as medicine for the illnesses brought on by the transition from winter to spring. Finally, in this time, there were concerns from the government about the possibilities of an increase of Covid cases because of the festival as everyone was touching the other’s faces, but the reality of it is that no matter what, people needed this day, needed the crowd, needed to celebrate again. Of course, it does not erase all problems, but at least for a day, everyone can claim to have a good laugh and lose oneself in the abundance of kindness that Holi brings.

This festival, for me, is benevolence at its paroxysm. A « Happy Holi! » day indeed.

Fanny is an intern from France

"This Visit Helps To Enhance Understanding the Role of Parliamentarians"

MS VERONIQUE RIOTTON, the President of the France-Nepal Friendship Group in the French National Assembly (the Lower House) since 2017, has recently paid a six-day visit to Nepal. She was accompanied by Mr. Nicolas Forissier and Ms. Graziella Melchior (both of them Vice Presidents). Ms. Riotton has specialized in the human resource management and has been active in the field for the last 20 years. She works with associations operating in the fields of sustainable development, education, sport and social issues. In France, Ms. Riotton is a Member of Parliament from the Haute-Savoie department under the French President Emmanuel Macron's political party, *La République En Marche*. On the 11th of March, Riotton agreed to an interview with **KESHAB POUDEL AND FANNY JONCKEAU** of *New Spotlight Magazine* at the French Embassy in Kathmandu to explain what took place during the meetings and the purpose of this trip. Excerpts:

How do you see Nepal-France relationship?

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1949 between France and Nepal, the two countries have maintained cordial bilateral relations. For 73 years now, the two countries have enjoyed an exemplary friendship.

How did you see your meetings with high dignitaries of Nepal?

Our meetings with the President, the Prime Minister, the Speaker, the Chairperson Nepal-France Inter-parliamentary Group (Mr. Madhav Kumar Nepal) and other political leaders were excellent.

What are your impressions after meeting with the Nepal-France Friendship Group?

My appointment as President [of the Friendship Group] first came from the desire to offer my services to the Nepali community. I realized that the volunteer work [in Nepal] is very well organized; it has no specific need for us. So I asked myself "where can I be useful?" and I ended up as the President of the Friendship Group. My role is to build diplomatic parliamentary relationships, and I think parliamentary diplomacy has its own entire place. In Nepal, this visit was eagerly awaited. But to go beyond the basic relations, we need to find topics to work on.

You created a number of laws in France regarding sustainable development (to fight food wastage and institute a circular economy with AGEZ/ZWCE law, as well as reforms for energetic renovations with the Elan law and sustainable conceptions with the Climate law). You are also a Member of the Sustainable Development Committee in the French National Assembly.

What did you think of Nepal regarding this subject?

We discussed the development of transport and hydroelectric energy in Nepal, but honestly, I was very surprised by the difficulty of waste collection in Kathmandu, and I expect to find ways to get [Nepal] out of the plastic era. I also think about energetic renovations of buildings like for example double glazing windows.

In 2019, there was mention of a cable car to be installed in Kathmandu in order to lighten the traffic; is it still in the making?

There were actually three projects brought up: the launch of a telecommunication satellite, the security printing press and the cable car. Concerning the cable car project we hope the French firm POMA could participate however it seems it has been replaced by the idea of a subway with a call for bids.

What other subjects came up in the meetings?

The Covid-19 situation was only rarely mentioned, the President only alluded to the fear of a 4th wave but we discussed the fact the Nepali Parliament remained obstructed. So we brought up the importance of the Parliament in Nepal, in the sense that it needs to take up a lot more space!

Women's representation is a subject that, we believe, you hold dear as you are a Member of the Women Bureau of Inter-Parliamentary Union and you promote women's place in politics. What did you think of it in Nepal?

I believe the law demanding 33 % of women in the Parliament at a national level from the Constitution of 2015 helped, and everyone in the meetings agreed with fact women's place existed but personally I was a bit disappointed. We talked about the women representation and the caste systems which are subjects that, as a European, is puzzling to me. But my only message toward women is to say that quota is a first step but not enough. We have to continue working on women education and have to create women networks.

All in all, how was your stay in Nepal?

The meetings were very rich and I felt a great deal of credit, attentiveness, and the warmth in the relations with the Nepali people. I was warmly welcomed, and after the



end of my official mission, I will be visiting places outside of the valley so that I can discover more.

As we are meeting you at the end of your visit, how do you assess your delegation visit to Nepal?

After discussing with high-level dignitaries and women parliamentarians, we found that Nepal has made some good progress on women empowerment and increasing the participation of women in Nepali politics. The mandatory constitutional provisions in the law and the Constitution have provided certain reservation for women. However, it is not in itself enough to increase participation. Although women participation has increased, it is yet to reach the same level as the men. Several women who had even joined politics are quitting because of a lack of opportunities given to them. For instance, a popular woman Mayor Candidate of Kathmandu Metropolitan City is said to be retiring from politics. After meeting several women leaders and activists, we came to the point where there are still many barriers in politics for women.

Don't you think Nepal's recent positive intervention brings change?

It is good to see some good provisions in the law and Constitution. However, Nepal needs to change its mindset and values. We hope that things will be better in

Nepal for women politicians. Reservation is good but people have to realize that all are equal.

Nepal voted against the Russian invasion of Ukraine at the UN and calls for Russia to respect the sovereignty, integrity and independence of Ukraine. During the meeting with Nepali delegations, have you mentioned this issue?

French people and the parliament support the French Government which has been demanding Russia to end the Russian war on Ukraine and implement an immediate cease-fire. An immediate cease-fire is necessary to improve the humanitarian situation in Ukraine. As an issue of global concern, Nepali leaders also supported the view that an end to the war in Ukraine is needed.

The situation in Europe is quite volatile with the recent invasion of Ukraine, what is France's take on it?

The French government has condemned this invasion and we know that there will be economic and social consequences of course. Despite these consequences, France will welcome and shelter the Ukrainian refugees. Regardless of the implications on the economy, we will support sectors that are in financial difficulty to maintain the economic sanctions against Russia.

EU SUPPORT TO PILACHHEN

Reviving Tradition

Funded by the European Union and implemented by UN-Habitat Nepal in close collaboration with local government and local community, Pilachhen has shown how it is possible to revive tangible and intangible heritage sites such as Ponds, Patis and Dharas, the water spouts, helping the switch to green and sustainable settlements. Destroyed by the great earthquake of 2015, the ancient Newar settlement of Patan has now turned into a place where one can see heritage, tradition and livelihood thriving together. At a time when Kathmandu Valley's traditional settlements are gradually disappearing, the support extended by European Union has revived the ancient treasure of Pilachhen. Spending over three hours, mingling, sharing and walking with local people and local leaders, Nona Deprez, the ambassador of the European Union, observed the activities completed under Parya Sampada Pilachhen Program

By KESHAB POUDEL

When Nona Deprez, the ambassador of the European Union to Nepal, arrived at Pilachhen on March 15, the long wait of the local community to warmly greet and welcome the guest, for the valuable financial support that helped reconstruct their ponds and revive the local tradition and culture, had ended.

The day was also significant for the Pilachhen locals because they were hosts to a gathering of all the important persons, including Mayor of Lalitpur Metropolitan City (LMC) Chiribabu Maharjan, a senior government official from the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, Nepal Tourism Board, higher offi-

cials from UN-Habitat and community leaders.

As ambassador Deprez, and Mayor Chiri Babu Maharjan jointly inaugurated Pilachhen Pond and laid the foundation for Pilachhen Pati, a long dream of local residents to revive their traditional settlements had come true.

In their traditional attire and music, local people of Pilachhen, a Newar settlement, 10 kilometers south-east of the capital Kathmandu, had enthusiastically guided Ambassador Deprez and Mayor Maharjan to the area.

It was their day of celebration to welcome Ambassador Deprez and Mayor Maharjan in their tradi-

tional elegance as the guests jointly laid the foundation stone of the pati.

Besides, the city dwellers also felt generous to show all the activities and construction sites to ambassador Deprez, who spent almost three hours interacting with the local people and entrepreneurs.

Thanking the local community for the warmth of the welcome and greetings, ambassador Deprez said, "I would like to thank Mayor of Lalitpur Metropolitan City, Ward officials, UN-Habitat and local community for organizing this beautiful event in this beautiful Patan city of Pilachhen. It is really a wonderful opportunity to come here to meet and speak to all of you and to see through



my eyes the tangible and intangible heritage of this old and beautiful Newar settlement. European Union has supported UN-Habitat for this and this is a beautiful example of support given to the Switch for Asian cities. The project has helped municipalities in the Kathmandu valley to move to green and sustainable city preserving tangible and intangible culture.”

Local people and elected representatives also utilized the day briefing on the activities allowing her to mingle with the local people.

“We are happy to see the ambassador of the European Union to Nepal in our area. We are very grateful to them. Without their support, the reconstruction of historic ponds and other activities to enhance the livelihood of local people would not have been possible. Similarly, the

presence of Mayor of LMC Chiribabu and other government officials in this small locality is highly valuable,” said Kul Bahadur Maharjan, Ward Chairperson, LMC 7.

Funded by European Union and implemented by United Nations

Human Settlements Program, Nepal in close collaboration with the local community, elected local government and backing of the Federal government, Parya Sampada Pilachhen Program is unique, of its kind, launched following the devastating





earthquake of 2015.

“This is the best example of collaboration among different stakeholders to revive and restore tangible and intangible cultural, heritage sites aiming to improve the livelihood,” said Mayor Maharjan. “LMC is grateful to European Union for generous funding aimed to revive our culture and heritage.”

When Ambassador Nona Deprez and Mayor of LMC Maharjan jointly inaugurated the Pond and laid the foundation of the Pati, two highly valuable heritage sites in Pilachhen Tole, a new chapter was starting for the settlement.

“This program is not only the reconstruction of pond and pati. This also helps empower women through entrepreneur’s skills, promoting the local products,” said Ganga Maharjan, owner of local brand pickle. Along with tangible heritage sites, local women groups also learn how to produce local products.

“We are happy that we were able to show our special guest ambassador Nona Deprez how the program helped revive heritage sites and transform a community.”

Although the day was

hectic for the residents of Pilachhen, they showcased the activities to the ambassador Deprez who keenly observed different events organized to demonstrate the development activities including the livelihood promotion.

The event featured an art gallery, food stall, bhajan pati and locally produced handicrafts and local goods like pickles and soap. At the end of the program, the organizer presented a short documentary of the local Pilachhen.

Funded by the European Union under the SWITCH Asia Program, which has been assisting different stakeholders to complete the overall re-construction of the settlement, the project is a close collaboration among the development partners, local government and community.

Project Ownership

Unlike many other programs, all the stakeholders joined in the program to take its ownership. Along with local communities, local level ward, LMC, the representatives from the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation and Nepal Tourism Board expressed that they will own the project.

As guest speaker Pragya Pradhan, Habitat Program Manager, UN-Habitat, Mani Ram Lamichhane, Director, Nepal Tourism Board, Tirtha Lal Maharjan, Chairperson, Jyapu Samaj, Jeevan Maharjan, Chairperson, MankaKhala and undersecretary of Ministry expressed their commitments to the project.

During the program, sharing Parya Sampada’s contribution in Pilachhen Community, Ranjan





Prakash Shrestha, Sr. Program Manager, E.U, handed over Technical Assistance (Municipal Drawings) and Comprehensive Heritage Settlement Recovery Plan of Pilachhen to ward chair of LMC.

Similarly, handover of drawings Tadhan Nani Falcha and handover of Tourism Development Plan + Tourism based Entrepreneurship Development Plan to the representatives of NTB and Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil aviation also took place.

All these activities helped to enhance the sense of ownership of the project.

Project Background:

Pilachhen is one of the most affected traditional settlements from the 2015 earthquake. Most of the houses collapsed during the disaster and the community is still working on reconstruction.

PARYA SAMPADA project has been supporting the Pilachhen community, working together with MAYA FOUNDATION, in reconstruction, enhancing the livelihood of the community and promoting tourism activities in the traditional area. The project fund-

ed by the European Union under SWITCH Asia Program has been assisting different stakeholders to complete the overall re-construction of the settlement.

The project has supported the preparation of the “Heritage Settlement Recovery Plan of Pilachhen”. This comprehensive plan guides the local bodies and other stakeholders on the reconstruction of the public amenities. The project has supported the preparation of doc-

uments for the private buildings in the Build Back Better module. Detail drawings and technical assistance were provided for the construction of “Pati” and “Ponds” in the settlement.

Similarly, the project has also been supported in different entrepreneurship training which shall enhance the capacity of the youth and women. Despite the disturbances from the global pandemic, the project is working together with the community in the promotion of different tourism-based activities. Supporting the local community in the conservation of intangible heritage, i.e., flute training is one of the remarkable achievements

during the lockdown. “Tourism based Entrepreneurship Development Plan of Pilachhen” and “Tourism Development Plan of Pilachhen” are the milestones that shall support the local governing bodies and other stakeholders to ensure the overall development of the community.

Damaged and devastated by the Gurkha earthquake in 2015, the Newari settlements have been revived, preserving their past glory.





Supported by the European Union and implemented by UN-Habitat through Sustainable Tourism and Green Growth collaboration with the local community, NGOs, Lalitpur Metropolitan and NRA, Sustainable Tourism and Green Growth for Heritage Settlements of Kathmandu Valley is a game-changer for the local community.

At a time when many other traditional settlements are still in the process of revival, the local community of Pilachhen has already seen the results yielded. Although COVID-19 has badly shaken Nepal's tourism sector due to the lack of foreign tourists, Pilachhen is attracting domestic tourists.

For the support given by the Deprez European Union to revive and preserve their city and way of life, Ambassador Nona Deprez's was received well as her presence was highly important for them. The warm welcome given to the ambassador was their reflection of love for the revival of their city.

During the last four years,

Pilachhen has been drastically transformed from being amidst devastation and destruction to a city reviving its traditional settlements. Along with the private houses, Falacha Pati, stone spout, traditional ponds, street solar lights, renovation of public toilets and viewpoint have already been



constructed.

A total of 320 locals have been trained on various skills like Yomari Moulding, Wood Craft,

Homestay Management, Cooking and Food Processing, Dhime Instrument, Lakhe Dance, Pickle production, Bhyo, Advance stitching, etc. Other locals, including females, were trained in Entrepreneurship Development.

"Training young people in traditional crafts like woodcarving is a great example of the economic opportunities of promoting culture," said ambassador Deprez who interacted with the local community observing their way of life.

Mayor of Lalitpur Metropolitan City Maharjan lauded the support given by the European Union for the revival of the two traditional Newari settlements and livelihood. "LMC and local community are very grateful to European Union for its support and UN-Habitat and other NGOs for their contribution to restoring the cities in the old style."

In close collaboration with local elected representatives, local

communities and the Nepal government, the project has been reviving not only the physical structures but

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structures, Pilachhen has preserved their traditional style as a showcase for other settlements.

Had the UN-Habitat not sought solutions through sustainable tourism, Pilachhen would also not have revived as it is today. UN-Habitat launched the project with the main objective of reducing poverty through building the economy of people contributing towards mitigating climate change, promoting sustainable development through technical assistance policy support and pilot demonstration.

Community mobilization, heritage conservation and livelihood enhancement are three pillars of the project. These are key factors for the revival of Pilachhen as well. During the visit of ambassador Deprez, local people have shown how their tradition and culture can lure tourists in the future thanks to the support of the European Union.

also the traditional lifestyles, cultures and handicrafts. Thus, the multi-purpose training center is highly important.

The project is also promoting entrepreneurship among women and youth. With SME engagement and investment, product innovation

and sector campaigns, the project hopes to support the livelihood of the people.

Although some of the traditional Newar settlements in the Kathmandu Valley have been losing their traditional styles with the rampant construction of new concrete



"Our Reports Show What Muslims Need"

Like all other 10 commissions, Muslim Commission has also presented three annual reports to President and the government has already tabled them to the House of Representatives. However, it is yet to be debated in the Committee of House of Representatives. Given such a situation, **SAMIM MIYA ANSARI**, chairperson, Muslim Commission, Nepal, spoke to **KESHAB POUDEL** on various issues regarding the role, accountability and effectiveness of the commission to raise the voices of minority Muslim community of Nepal. Excerpts:

You have already presented three annual reports to the President. Have your reports ever been discussed on concerned parliamentary committee?

Once the commission presents the report to President, it is handed over to the government to table it to parliament for further discussion. However, we are yet to receive any information or notice for the discussion on the reports. Generally, we are maintaining annual formal rituals.

As per the spirit and letter, as conceived by the constitution, there is the need to discuss the commissions' annual report in the parliamentary committee and the committee should direct concerned authorities to implement the suggestions given by the commission. As a constitutional body, we are accountable to the parliament and parliamentary committee has the right to give us directions. Due to lack of discussion in the parliamentary committee, we are facing difficulties to implement suggestions and recommendations. Although the commission is a constitutional entity, it is yet to be treated as a constitutional body. Despite giving us constitutional status and responsibilities to protect and promote the rights of Muslim, the resources are inadequate to conduct all the activities. The government has been providing us meager budget, just paying salary and stationeries. Similarly, there are small numbers of employees. They are hampering our activities and performance. We have already discussed issues of the constitutional commissions and we have also made efforts to draw the attention of the government.

Communities have high hope on our commissions. Their expectation is getting higher following the formation of the commission. People think that all the problems will be settled through the commission. Given the government's views toward us, what I can say for sure is that we will not be able to fulfill the expectations of the communities. However, we have been working hard to raise awareness in various social issues including domestic violence and gender. With limited resources and apathy of all concerned stakeholders towards us, we are unable to address all the problems and concerns of the community.

As you said you have presented three annual reports to the President, where your reports are now then?

We read through the newspaper that president handed over reports to the government to table at parliament. Likewise, we also read the news that the concerned ministers tabled our report in the parliament. That is what the information we receive about our results. However, we have not heard anything about the discussions on our report.

What do the Parliamentary Committees do then?

Our report goes to the Women, Children and Social Welfare Committee of the House of Representatives. I am fortunate enough to say that Niru Pal, who is the chairperson of the committee, invited us once to discuss on the report. We took part in the half day discussions. However, the recommendations and direction given by the committee is yet to be addressed. That is only one time. Our recommendations and suggestions are related to the committee. The report presented by us should have been debated intensively. It is unfortunate to say that the work of debating our report is yet to start.

Why are the reports of the commission so important?

Our reports are linked with the future of community. For instance, the report presented by the Muslim Commission is all about the state of Muslims, their grievances and difficulties ignored by various state sector. Our reports highlight what needs to be done to empower Muslim community, their development and participation in the various sectors of the state. To fulfill the objective of establishment of the commission, the committee of House of Representatives should have spared some time. Only through discussion, we can suggest and direct the government what it needs to do for the empowerment and protection of Nepali Muslim Community. Although various organizations have been working in the areas of inclusion, upliftment and empowerment of Muslim community, what we have seen is that there is nothing like this. The state of Muslim community is very bad. They are an economically, socially and political excluded group. Although the government should have been serious about the problems faced by Muslim community, I have not felt this is the case so far.



How about discussing it in the provincial level and local level?

As per the constitution, presenting the annual report to the President of Nepal is the main responsibility of the commission. President hands over the report to the government to table it in the parliament for further discussion. This entire process is to make our commission accountable to the people. Although there is no such provision, the commission has been sending it to the provincial head and provincial legislature. At a time when even Federal House of Representatives has not been taking any step to discuss and debate on our report, the discussion at Provincial level and local level has no meaning. Provincial level and local level have no constitutional right either. If federal parliament ignores our report, there is no sense to discuss in province and local level.

So where is the commission accountable now for its work?

Like all other commissions, we are accountable to the people through the federal parliament. Only federal parliament can direct us and if necessary remove any member through impeachment motion. Given the current situation, we are unable to address the accountability part. Although federal parliament is not responding to our report, the commission has envisaged its own strategy to reach to the people. We have our website; complaint boxes and direct hotline to listen to the voices of people's grievances. We do regular visit and meeting with the community at the grass root level. We are knocking the doors of different government agencies.

How much resources have been allocated to your commission?

It is not the commission to ask budget for itself. However, the government has to allocate us adequate budget in accordance to our needs. Since Muslim Commission is a community related organization dedicated to the betterment of community, it is the government to decide what they want to do for Muslim Community's empowerment and development. As you know, Muslim community has been living in Nepal since centuries and they have been living in all 77 districts since our basic work is to conduct the research and study of the state of group, the government should provide us budget to perform such work. As per the data of census report of 2011, Muslim population consists of 5 percent. However, we don't have any exact and detailed data about their economic, cultural and social status and their state. For this, we need budget for research. In a similar way, we need budget to launch awareness generation activities at the community level, we need budget for it.

What are the main problems faced by the community as such?

Muslim community has been facing all kinds of problems in Nepal. Even they don't have schools to send their kids. There is rampant illiteracy among the Muslim community. As the condition of Madarsa have been dilapidated, it affects the quality education of Muslims. There is the need to improve the state of Madarsa and integrate the Muslim in modern education system. For all these, there is

FACE TO FACE

the need of a study and it requires budget. Finance Ministry should have consulted us regarding our needs and demand before allocating the budget. However, Finance Ministry has been arbitrarily allocating the budget. As I said earlier, the thing is not moving in the way visualized by the constitution.

As you said you receive nominal budget, how has Muslim Commission been implementing the programs?

Despite inadequate and small budget, Muslim Commission has been able to implement and launch its programs throughout the country to protect the Muslim community. Of course, the state has not been supporting us. We are able to perform our duty and role reaching the com-



munity. We are doing our best on the basis of fund provided to us using it for maximum benefits.

You have also mentioned that the commission has been receiving meager budget. How do you function then?

Frankly speaking, there is virtually no budget at all for other activities. We have to perform the work for the community. Of course, much budget is allocated for salary, employees' fund, and petrol and house rents. The beauty of the commission is that it has been producing maximum results with its limited resources. Since we are here to work for community, this spirit has been inspiring us to do work. We have been working under a Terms of Reference.

What are the priorities of the commission?

We have been mostly focusing on research and study now aiming to support government to develop programs dedicated the Muslim community. Similarly, we have also been launching the awareness campaign and conducting special class for preparation of Public Service Commission examination.

As per the constitution, there is a provision that the House of Representatives will review whether Muslim Commission is required for the country. How do you justify that this commission is needed for beyond 10 years?

Although the constitution was promulgated in 2015, I was appointed here in 2018 and I am just running in my third-year tenure. The members of the commission

were appointed just last year. Muslim community has been living in very critical conditions deprived of their rights and duties. Thus, it is impossible to solve their problems in the matter of five or ten years. They require sustained activities for decades. Thus, the condition for reviewing the need of commission is unjustifiable. The time is yet to ripen for the review of the commission. The commissions were formulated late and faced the covid-19 restrictions. It is impossible to justify the review of existence of the commission.

But, the constitution has an article saying that the House of Representatives should review it?

Whatever the constitution says, it needs to be suspended for some time to come. The commission is required till all the members of the community are empowered and strengthened. Each commission should be given adequate resources and human resources to launch awareness campaign and implement programs to empower community. People are above the constitution.

What kind of complaints are received and what is their volume in the commission?

Although the constitution of Nepal has recognized Muslim under a separate cluster, due to lack of laws Muslims are yet to receive separate reservation quota for them in civil service, military, police and other areas of state. It is unfortunate to say that Muslims are still under Madheshi cluster as per the reservation act passed by the Interim Constitution. Muslims are now contesting all kinds of government exam either in open or in Madheshi cluster. The commission has been suggesting to provide separate cluster of Muslim so that they can secure their own reservations. All our three reports, we raised this issue but the House of Representatives is yet to pass the law as per the letter and spirit of new constitution.

Since Muslims have been living in Madhesh, what is wrong to put them in the same cluster?

Of course, Muslims have been living in Madhesh and facing similar discriminations. Muslims have been facing double discrimination Muslims and Madheshi. We want separate cluster for Muslims as envisaged by constitution. We live in Madhesh with similar feature but we are Muslim. We have struggled for long to get recognition as Muslims. We have already written numbers of letters to all concerned including prime minister, parliament.

What are the major problems?

One of the major problems is lack of land for burial for Muslims. Most of our burial place (Kabristan) is open and they are under encroachment. In many places, the public deny to use our old Kabristan for burial purposes. We don't have land to perform burial. No one is listening to us. We have been receiving many complaints regarding this. With lack of budget and space, the conditions of Madarsa are getting worse day by day. There are complains related to domestic violence and gender inequalities.

SARDAR RUDRA RAJ PANDE JAYANTI

Remembering Contributions

Sardar Rudra Raj Pande Award Conferred To Historian Chitta Ranjan Nepali

By A CORRESPONDENT

At a time when many renowned old figures of Nepalese society are disappearing due to the negligence of state and their near and dear ones, family members of Sardar late Rudra Raj Pande have shown an exemplary work by annually organizing the program of awarding valuable work of people of Nepal's different walks of life.

Thanks to the initiative taken by late Pande's son Dr. Badri Raj Pande and grandson Dr. Neil Pande and other family members, people from different walks of life find time to remember works and contributions of Sardar Rudra Raj Pande, Nepal's renowned historian and scholar.

From Nepali literature to education and social reforms, Sardar Rudra Raj Pande's contributions are well known. His novel *Roopmati* is the largest volume of a Nepali novel which many compare with Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* in describing the details.

As a vice chancellor to transfer the Tribhuwan University from Tripureshwor to Kirtipur, late Sardar Pande, who had also opened education for lower cast people at Durbar School, took several decisions to upgrade Nepal's higher education.

Looking at Sardar Pande's contribution, Sardar Rudra Raj Pande Memorial Trust has been annually conferring award and cash to Nepalese scholars, writers and institutions.

This year historian and litterateur Chitta Ranjan Nepali was felicitated for his contribution to Nepalese History with Sardar Rudra Raj Pande Award, which carries Rs. 25000.00 in cash.

The first Vice Chancellor of Kathmandu University Professor Dr Suresh Raj Sharma conferred the

award to historian Nepali on the occasion of the 122nd Anniversary of Sardar Rudra Raj Pande amid a function in Kathmandu.

Conducted by Dr. Neil Pande, grandson of late Rudra Raj Pande, historian Prof. Dr. Triratna Manandhar shed light on the contributions of Sardar Rudra Raj Pande in the field of Education, History, Literature and

late Pande."

He also spoke on the contribution made by Chitta Ranjan Nepali in the field of History. Awardees Chitta Ranjan Nepali thanked the committee for bestowing him the prestigious award. On the occasion, the chief guest Prof. Dr. Suresh Raj Sharma reminisced on the formative days of Tribhuwan University on the able leadership of Sardar Rudra Raj Pande as Vice Chancellor.

The program was presided by the Acting Chairman of Rudra Raj Sahitya Sewa Samiti Dr. Gouri Shankar Lal Das.

Govinda Prasad Sharma Regmi, the secretary of the Samiti, welcomed the participants and shed

light on its activities. Samiti has been felicitating national personalities in the field of education, literature, history and spirituality on a rotation basis yearly.

At the program attended by large numbers of scholars and people from different walks of life, Dr. Badri Raj Pande, son of late Rudra Raj Pande, thanked guests for attending the program on a short notice.

"Nepal's many renowned figures like Bal Krishna Sam, historian Baburam Acharya are disappearing from scene due to negligence of state and their family members, the work of Sardar Rudra Pande is shining," said Dr. Tandan. "Everyone has to learn from Pande family."



Spirituality.

Historian Dr. Manandhar shared the whole episode of how late Pande transferred Tribhuwan University's academic activities from Tripureshwor to Kirtipur. "His contributions to modernize education system in Nepal are immense and remembered forever."

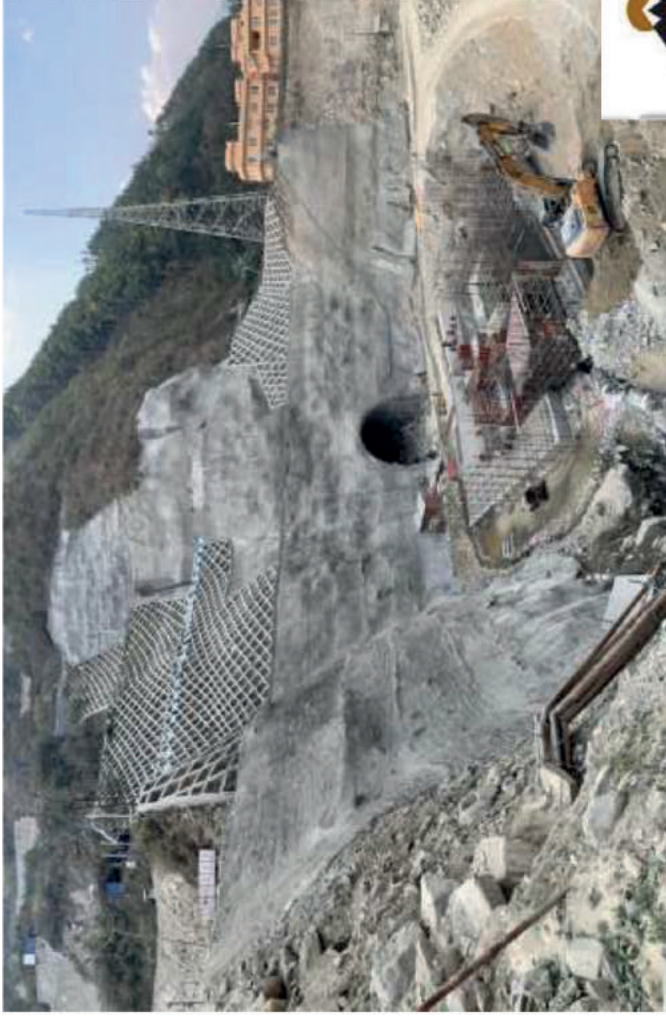
At a time when new generations of people are forgetting Nepal's many renowned figures due to negligence of their own children, Dr. Govinda Tandon, convener of the Award Committee, hailed the efforts taken by Rudra Raj Pande's family. "This is a great contribution for the country. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the great family members of

ग्याँसको प्रयोग गर्दा ध्यान दिनुपर्ने कुराहरू

- ग्याँस तथा आगो बलुञ्जेल भान्सा छाडेर टाढा नजाऔं।
- प्रयोग गरिसकेपछि ग्याँसको चुल्हो र रेगुलेटर बन्द गरौं।
- यथासम्भव ग्याँस सिलिण्डरलाई भान्सा कोठाभन्दा बाहिर राखौं।
- ग्याँस सिलिण्डर र सिलिण्डरको पाइप समय-समयमा जाँच गरौं, कुनै खराबी वा टुटफुट भए, तुरुन्त मर्मत गरौं।
- ग्याँस सिलिण्डर लिँदा सिल भए/नभएको हेरेर मात्र लिऔं।
- तौल कम भएको, धेरै गन्हाउने (लिक भएको शंकास्पद) सिलिण्डर घरमा नल्याऔं।
- सलाई, लाइटरजस्ता प्रज्वलनशील सामग्री केटाकेटीले भेट्ने गरी नराखौं।



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Hydrology

Catchment Area: - 4577 km²

Design Discharge (at 70 % PoE): - 51 m³/sec

Head Pond Connected to UT3A Tailrace Pond

Size: 29 (L) x 5.2 to 11.0 (B) x 7.35 to 14.8 (H)

Lowest Bed Level: - 714.20 m

Intake: - Bell Mouth Type

Approach Pressure Conduit

Type: - Box Culvert

Length: - 243.47 m + 40 m

Size: - 5.1 m x 5.1 m Square and 5.1 m diameter

Headrace Tunnel

Shape: - Horseshoe

Length: - 3805.48 m

Diameter: - 5.1 m ~ 6.1 m

Adit Tunnel

Shape: - Inverted D

Length of Adit 1: - 463.3 m, Diameter: - 4.0 m + 1.5 m

Length of Adit 2: - 119.17 m Diameter: - 5.95 m ~ 6.1 m

Surge Tank

Type: - Restricted Orifice

Diameter: - 15.0 m

Height: - 39.3 m

Tailrace Conduit

Penstock

Length: - 185.33m

Diameter: - 4.2

Thickness: - 13mm

Powerhouse

Type: - Surface

Size (L X B X H): - 40.4 m x 19.30 m x 33.31 m

Type: - RCC

Length: - 180 m (5.323 m (B) x 3.6 m (H)

Turbine

Type: - Vertical Axis Francis

Capacity: - 2 X 19.715 MW

Generator

Type: - 3 Phase Synchronous

Capacity: - 2 X 22.7047 MVA

Transformer

Type: - 3 Phase Oil Immersed Outdoor ONAN

Capacity: - 2 X 23 MVA

Voltage: - 11KV /132KV

Transmission Line

Voltage Level: - 132KV, Double Circuit (3km)



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