



OPINION
Dipak Gyawali



VIEWPOINT
Dr. Suresh C. Chalise



ARTICLE
Hemang Dixit

DAO/Kathmandu Regd. No. 148/11/063/064
ISSN: 2091-0711

NEW SPOTLIGHT

www.spotlightnepal.com

July.- 22, 2022

FORTNIGHTLY

Can Nepal's Economy Go Sri-Lanka Way?

INSIDE



**ELECTION COMMISSION
IN NEED OF POLICY**



**ELECTRIC COOKING
ACCELERATING SPEED**



**YEAR 2020/021
NEA'S DARK YEAR**

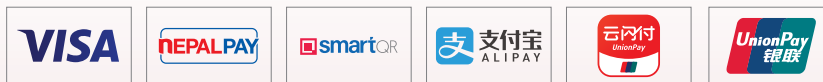
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Kathmandu DAO Regd. No.

148/11/063/64

Central Region Postal Regd.

No. 36/067/068

US Library of Congress Catalogue

No. 91-905060, ISSN : 2091-0711
(Print), ISSN: 2091-0754 (Online)

Printing

Megha Offset Printing Press P. Ltd.,
Dhapasi, Kathmandu
Tel. : 977-1-4363624

If the recent political events on the surface above the political turf of Nepal is any indication, a sudden political change looks like looming large. Brewing after the political upheaval in Sri Lanka and just a couple of days after the completion of a high-level visit by a Chinese team led by Liu Jianchao, the head of the International Liaison Department of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), new moves appear as shaking the political landscape of Nepal. The issue of political affiliation of governor Maha Prasad Adhikari is rocking the financial sector and Maoist chair Prachanda's short two-day visit to India is another important event in the recent politics of the country. His meeting with high-level officials including Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishanker and national security advisor may draw new lines for politics.

The assassination of widely popular former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has shocked the world. Nepalese Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba extended condolences and sympathies to the bereaved family members of late Prime Minister Abe. Prime Minister Deuba has stated that Abe's demise is an irreparable loss not only for Japan but also for the world at large. Prime Minister Deuba has further mentioned that late Abe was a close friend and well-wisher of Nepal. For Sri Lanka, this week was a week of a major political upheaval. The collapse of the government following the resignation of its president and the scenario in the aftermath of the event has created a lot of confusion. Although the current political turmoil has shaken the society, Sri Lanka, which has already faced a number of violent separatist and sectarian incidents in the past, will definitely overcome the crises faced by the country. Under the wise leadership of politicians, civil society, seasoned bureaucracy, we hope Sri Lanka will thrive again.

Keshab Poudel

Editor

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India Gifted Disaster Relief Material To Nepal

As part of India's continued commitment to support disaster relief efforts of Nepal, Naveen Srivastava, Ambassador of India to Nepal, handed over consignments of flood and disaster-relief material to Bal Krishna Khand, Home Minister, in a ceremony held at the



Ministry of Home Affairs, Singhdurbar, Kathmandu. The relief material includes 3000 tents (big/family) and ten motor inflatable boats.

In his remarks during the event, Ambassador Srivastava expressed that this timely supply of relief material is optimally utilized by concerned agencies to ensure its maximum benefit by timely distribution and efficient utilization.

Minister Khand, in his remarks, thanked the Government of India for the timely delivery of the relief material and appreciated ongoing disaster relief-related cooperation between India and Nepal.

Chinese Minister Calls On PM Deuba And Minister Dr. Khadka

Minister of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China Liu Jianchao paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba when matters of mutual interest between Nepal and China were discussed.



Liu Jianchao also had a meeting with Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. Narayan Khadka at

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The two Ministers exchanged views on further strengthening of bilateral relations between Nepal and China.

Minister Liu and his delegation arrived in Kathmandu on a three-day visit to Nepal. He was accorded a warm welcome upon his arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport by representatives of different political parties of Nepal, and an official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The visiting Communist Party of China (CPC)'s foreign department chief Liu Jainchao paid a courtesy call on President Bidya Devi Bhandari.

The courtesy meeting was held at the Office of the President-Sheetal Niwas- in Kathmandu, according to the Of-

fice of the President.

Indian Ambassador Srivastava Calls On COAS General Sharma

Ambassador of India to Nepal Naveen Srivastava paid a courtesy call on Chief of Army Staff General Prabhu Ram Sharma at Nepal Army Headquarters.

During the meeting, COAS General Sharma and ambassador Srivastava discussed the bilateral issues of interest and relations between the two countries. Nepal Army holds the view that this kind of meeting will help foster and further strengthen warm relations between the two countries.



Japan Hands Over Vocational Training Building In Darchula

The handover ceremony was held for a Vocational Training Center constructed with Japanese assistance at Latinath Secondary School in Darchula District. The new building was built with grant assistance of USD 82,953 under the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) of the Japanese Government.

On the occasion, Charge d'Affaires ad interim of Japan to Nepal, TAMURA Takahiro, sent a message congratulating everyone involved in the project. He appreciated all who worked with the Embassy to complete the project and hoped the local community would benefit from the vocational training organized by Latinath Secondary School at the newly constructed building.

Charge d'Affaires ad interim of Japan to Nepal, TAMURA also stated that he is happy to hand over the new building to provide training to the people in the district in this 120th anniversary year since the first Nepali students were dispatched to Japan for their study.

Latinath Secondary School is a public school providing pre-primary to grade twelve education for more than 1,000 students. The school, established in 1955, has also offered various vocational trainings in agriculture and skill-oriented subjects since 2018 to increase employment opportunities and cash incomes of the people in the district.



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Previously, there was no specific training center building, and it caused difficulties in organizing training activities. Therefore, this support will provide the appropriate environment to operate qualified and quality vocational training for the prosperity and sustainable development of the community. The Embassy of Japan believes that this new training center will provide appropriate training to the local people and contribute to improving their lives.

Ambassador Of India To Nepal Naveen Srivastava Presents His Credentials

Naveen Srivastava, Ambassador of India to Nepal, presented his credentials to the President of Nepal Ms. Bidya Devi Bhandari at a ceremony held at President's Office, Sheelal Niwas.

Ambassador Srivastava also paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba after presenting his credentials.

In his meetings, Ambassador Srivastava conveyed the greetings from President and Prime Minister of India. He added that recent visit of PM Sher Bahadur Deuba to India and that of PM Narendra Modi to Nepal had imparted renewed momentum to the bilateral relationship. He also conveyed his commitment to take forward the friendly



relations between the two countries.

Ambassador Srivastava is the 26th Ambassador of India to Nepal. He has succeeded Ambassador Vinay Mohan Kwatra, who left Nepal for New Delhi in April 2022 for his assignment as Foreign Secretary.

All Nepal Bhikkhu Association Donates Essential Medicines To Sri Lanka

A donation of essential medicines worth over NRs 25 lakhs was handed over to the Embassy of Sri Lanka by the All Nepal Bhikkhu Association (ANBA) and the "Hands for Sri Lanka" committee formed under the ANBA to coordinate the project, on 04th July 2022.

The handing over ceremony was graced by the Chief Sanganyaka of Nepal, the Most. Ven. Bodhisena Maha Thero and monks representing the ANBA including its President Ven. Dhamma Sobhana Thero, ANBA Committee Members, coordinator of the project Ven. Pannasara Thero and lay representatives of "Hands for Sri Lanka".

The Chief Sangha Nayaka Thero, who had made the first contribution, highlighted the strong religious bond between the two countries which led the ANBA to initiate the "Hands for Sri Lanka" project to help the Sri Lankan people at this time of need. He further underlined Sri Lanka's contribution to Theravada Buddhism in Nepal, and the number of monks who have

received education in Sri Lanka over the years. President of the ANBA Ven. Dhamma Sobhana Thero also addressed the gathering and highlighted

the instances of mutual humanitarian assistance between Sri Lanka and Nepal including the assistance received from Sri Lanka after the earthquake in 2015.

Ambassador Himalee Arunatilaka conveyed her heartfelt gratitude to the Nepali people who have generously contributed towards the project. The Ambassador also thanked the ANBA and all members of "Hands for Sri Lanka" for their commitment and efforts in organizing the donation of essential medicines to the Sri Lankan people.

The event concluded with Seth pirth chanting by the Venerable members of the Maha Sanga to invoke blessings on the people of both Sri Lanka and Nepal.

CoAS General Sharma Returns Home Completing U.S. Visit

Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Prabhuram Sharma has returned home after completing his official visit to the United States. He was on an official visit to the United States from June 27 to July 1.

He visited the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) Mission in Lebanon from June 18 to 22 and the United Nations Disengagement in Syria on June 22 and 23, with the aim of encouraging the deployment of troops to peace in the conflict zone and gaining information on various aspects and future plans of UN missions. He was visiting the Observer Force (UNDOF) Mission.

Chief of Army Staff Sharma was welcomed by General Bal Krishna Karki and Defense Secretary Kiran Raj Sharma in a special room at Tribhuvan International Airport. In his honor, a detachment of the Nepal Army had offered a guard of honor.

It is said that this kind of high-level visit at different times will enhance the role and morale of the Nepali peacekeepers deployed in the conflict-affected countries and will help in strengthening the qualitative and managerial aspects of



the UN missions and formulating future plans.

The statement issued by the Nepal Army said that the visit to the United States of America will strengthen the cordial cooperation between the Nepal Army and the US Army and strengthen bilateral relations.

India Supports Construction Of School Buildings In Kapilvastu

Karun Bansal, First Secretary, Embassy of India, Kathmandu inaugurated two School Buildings of Shivbhari Secondary School and Janaki Higher Secondary School, Maharajgunj Municipality-9 in Kapilvastu District, Nepal.

These projects were undertaken with the grant assistance from Government of India at the cost of NRs.59.20 million as a Community Development Project under India-Nepal Development Cooperation in Education Sector. These projects are being inaugurated as part of “India@75 AzadiKaAmrit-Mahotsav” celebrations which commemorate 75 years of India’s independence.

Shivbhari Secondary School and Shree Janaki Higher Secondary School are old established schools in Kapilvastu District imparting education to more than 700 students and 1300 students respectively. The new infrastructure built under this project for these schools will create a suitable environment for studies.

Deb Sumsher Rana Academy Felicitates Dhabal Sumsher Rana

Chairperson of Shree Tin Deb Sumsher Rana Academy Himalaya Sumsher Rana felicitated former mayor and general secretary of Rastriya Prajatantra Party Dhabal Sumsher



Rana for following the path of Deb Sumsher Rana.

He was conferred dosalla and letter of appreciation by chairperson Rana.

Rana, one of the family members of late Prime Minister Deb Sumsher, was conferred with Dosalla and appreciation letter for continuing to follow the path shown by Deb Sumsher Rana.

Vice Chairperson of Academy Paras Sumsher Rana and Deep Sumsher Rana, Superintendent of Nepal Police and secretary of Academy, among others, were present on the occasion.

Other members of the family of Deb Sumsher and persons from various walks of life also attended the function.

MAG Organizes Workshop On Workplace Safety In The Communication Sector

At a time when workplace safety has become one of the main concerns for much news room around the world and Nepal is not an exception, Media Advocacy Group (MAG) organized one day workshop on ‘Workplace safety in the communications sector.’



Not only the COVID-19 pandemic is resulting in more illnesses, but the emergence of remote work and dispersed workplaces are making it harder for journalists to reach their frontline and desk.

Given the sate of growing work from home for the media, MAG hosted a highly important workshop. Inaugurating the workshop, Minister for Communication and Information Technology Gyanendra Bahadur Karki stressed the need for making Nepali journalism open, free and respected in South Asia.

He made this statement at a seminar with the theme of ‘Workplace safety in the communications sector’ organized here by the Media Advocacy Group.

“The directives related to ensuring workplace safety in communications sector should not be limited to only a document, but it should be implemented in a way that sets an example for all citizens, but not only journalists.”

Emphasizing a discussion in making the entire society safe, but not only ensuring safety in the workplace and fields for media persons, the minister said, “For media-persons to become disciplined, responsible and impartial means to rid themselves and the society of violence of any sort.”

Similarly, Ministry Secretary Dr Baikuntha Aryal

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viewed that communications should be treated differently and sensibly while stating that it is the responsibility of the government to ensure workplace safety in the sector. Workplaces and fields for journalists should always be taken as different and sensible, he said, adding that the Press Council Nepal is an authorized body to make and implement the directive related to workplace safety for media persons.

On the occasion, former Chairperson of the Federation of Nepali Journalists Mahendra Bista tabled a concept of the directive related to workplace safety in the communications sector.

Executive Director Media Advocacy Group (MAG) Banita Basnet highlighted the importance of workplace safety for the media. She said that workplace safety has become one of the main priorities for organizations across the world. She said that safe workplaces are also productive ones. She said that in the present context of COVID-19 importance of safe workplace is all the more important.

U.S. Provides Additional 2,299,200 Pediatric Doses Of Pfizer To Nepal Through COVAX

“The Nepal-U.S. partnership against COVID-19 continues! Very happy to announce that an additional 2 million doses of pediatric Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines have arrived from the U.S.,” tweets U.S. Ambassador to Nepal Randy Berry

Ministry of Health and Population also noted about 2.3 million paediatric doses of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines have arrived in Nepal from the COVAX facility.

“Thank you to the countless parents, teachers, & health workers for their tireless efforts to protect Nepali children from COVID-19,” tweets U.S. Ambassador to Nepal Randy Berry. “The doses will be administered to the children from age 5 to 11.”

Dr Surendra Chaurasia, Chief of the Logistic management section of the Department of Health Service, informed that from the COVAX facility Pfizer Biontech’s 2,299,200 paediatric doses have arrived in Nepal.



The government launched a vaccination campaign for children from June 23 to 29 across the 27 districts in the first phase.

Dr Chaurasia said that the received vaccines will be administered to the children who were left during the first phase campaign and vaccines will also be used as a second dose.

Ambassador Berry Opens Restoration Kyalimana Dyo Pavilion In Kirtipur

U.S. Ambassador to Nepal Randy Berry inaugurated the restoration of the Kyalimana Dyo Pavilion in Kirtipur, reports U.S. Embassy, Nepal, on its Facebook page.

To restore and seismically strengthen the Khyalimana Dyo Pavilion, the U.S. Embassy has provided a grant to the Rabindra Puri Foundation, who will work closely with Khyali Dyo Guthi to manage the restoration work at this site.



Cultural restoration projects like this – and many others in Kathmandu and Patan Durbar squares and across Nepal – are a true testament to our vibrant 75 years of U.S.-Nepal relations.

NCC Calls For Australian Investment

Nepal Chamber of Commerce President Rajendra Malla has urged Australia to invest in Nepal confidently as it has already ensured abundant policy-level reforms in the relevant field.



During his meeting with Australia’s ambassador to Nepal, Felicity Volk, here, Malla sought the help of Australia to promote industries relating to herbs processing and mining and promote their international market.

He was for connecting Nepal and Australia by direct flight for the benefit of both countries.

World Bank Managing Director Emphasizes Green, Resilient, and Inclusive Development For Nepal

World Bank Managing Director for Development Policy and Partnerships, Mari Pangestu concluded her five-day visit to Nepal, reiterating the World Bank’s commitment to support Nepal’s resilient recovery from the pandemic. She was joined by Regional Vice President for South Asia, Hartwig Schafer.

Pangestu met with the President of Nepal, Bidya Devi Bhandari, Prime Minister of Nepal, Sher Bahadur Deuba, Minister of Finance, Janardan Sharma, and Minister of Energy, Water Resources & Irrigation, Pampha Bhusal. The meetings focused on Nepal’s economy, the impact of the COVID-19 pan-

democratic and the war in Ukraine, and Nepal's pathways to Green, Resilient, and Inclusive Development (GRID). In her meetings, Pangestu lauded Nepal as an early mover in pivoting towards GRID and reiterated the World Bank's support for the country's resilient recovery and sustainable development.

"Nepal is a champion in the region with the adoption of GRID as a strategic framework to guide development policy decisions," said Mari Pangestu. "As the largest multilateral funder of climate investments in developing countries, with more than \$26 billion provided for climate action last fiscal year alone, the World Bank Group takes pride in helping countries such as Nepal lay the foundation for sustainable, inclusive, and resilient recovery."



Pangestu participated in a high-level dialogue with senior representatives from the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Forests and Environment, development partners, private sector, and youth

to unpack key issues and opportunities for GRID in Nepal. The high-level event was organized building on the September 2021 Kathmandu Declaration endorsed by the Government of Nepal and 16 Development Partners, which identified up to \$7.4 billion in committed and potential support for GRID and paved the way for the development of a strategic action plan for Nepal.

"GRID is an integrated, cross-sectoral, and comprehensive approach to generating higher quality growth and development," said Hartwig Schafer. "One of the pillars of the approach is creating inclusive opportunities especially for women who play a key role in economic recovery and the society which will require investment in shock-responsive social protection, green job creation, and measures to strengthen diverse voices in development processes."

Administration Of Pfizer Pediatric Vaccines Begins

Chargé d'Affaires Micaller and USAID Mission Director Keyvanshad visited Adarsha Secondary School and witnessed excited parents and kids waiting for the vaccine.

"We are proud to work to keep kids safe," tweets U.S. Embassy Nepal. Under the donation of U.S. Government, 2.2 million of doses of Pfizer pediatric vaccines has been rolled out across Nepal.



"Pfizer vaccine shots are now available for kids aged 5-11 in Kathmandu and other districts! Vaccines will be available until June 29, in this first phase. Take your children to the nearest school vaccination center to get

their shots," tweets USAID/ Nepal.

China Commends Nepal's Decision Not To Move Ahead On SPP With U.S.

China commends the Nepali government's decision not to move ahead on the State Partnership Program (SPP) with the United States, a Foreign Ministry spokesperson said on 23 June.

Spokesperson Wang Wenbin made the remarks at a daily news briefing when asked to comment on the issue.

Wang said that the program had been widely controversial in Nepal, as various political parties and factions, the government, the army and people across the Nepalese society see the SPP as a military and security initiative closely linked to the Indo-Pacific Strategy. They consider it against the national interests of Nepal and its long-held non-aligned, balanced foreign policy to be part of the SPP.

"As Nepal's friendly and close neighbor and strategic cooperative partner, China commends the Nepali government's decision," Wang said, adding that China will continue to support Nepal in upholding its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and support Nepal's commitment to its independent and non-aligned foreign policy.



"China stands ready to work with Nepal to jointly safeguard regional security, stability and shared prosperity," said the spokesperson.

Nepal Should Prepare In Advance To Be Eligible For GSP Plus: Ambassador Nona Deprez

Nepal Handicraft Entrepreneur Association organized a seminar on Nepal's LDC Graduation' and its implication to Nepalese trade. As European Union is one of the major markets for Nepal's handicraft, retaining the market through new trade regime is equally important.

The key speaker of the program was Nona Deprez, EU Ambassador to Nepal.

"With Nepal set for LDC graduation by 2026, Nepal should prepare in advance to be eligible for GSP plus, another preferential trade regime of the EU," said Nona Deprez, EU ambassador to Nepal. Ambassador Nona Deprez also said EU is ready to work with Nepalese entrepreneurs.

Kathmandu about the visit of Indian CoAS, Nepal's

Ambassador to India, Dr Shankar Prasad Sharma also held talks with the Indian Army Chief earlier.



BUSINESS BRIEF

Nepal, World Bank Sign \$80M Water Project

The Government of Nepal and the World Bank signed an agreement equivalent to \$80 million (approximately Rs. 10 billion) concessional loan for a project to improve the delivery of water and sanitation services and promote integrated water resources management.

The agreement was signed by Finance Secretary Madhu Kumar Marasini, on behalf of the Government of Nepal, and World Bank Country Director for Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka Faris Hadad-Zervos.

“Our overarching priorities are guided by the objective of achieving sustainable and inclusive growth in alignment with federalism principles enshrined in the Constitution of Nepal. The project will support the provision of much-needed water supply and sanitation services to underserved and vulnerable communities, ensure better water sector coordination, and promote higher water quality and service standards,” stated Madhu Kumar Marasini, Finance Secretary.

The Water Sector Governance and Infrastructure Support Project will be implemented in strategic towns and rural municipalities in Karnali and Sudurpashchim provinces. Both provinces have



low access to water supply and sanitation services, a higher incidence of poverty, and are vulnerable to climate change.

“This project will help strengthen the delivery of water and sanitation services at the local level by building the capacity

of municipalities, while at the same time addressing critical gaps in water and sanitation infrastructure to support Nepal’s economic progress and a green, resilient, and inclusive development,” said Faris Hadad-Zervos, World Bank Country Director for Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

The project will help the local governments develop viable institutions to deliver water supply and sanitation services sustainably and efficiently. The project will also strengthen the accountability of the sector to customers by building the monitoring and regulatory capacity of provincial and federal government agencies in the sector. These will be complemented by investments in construction and rehabilitation of vital water supply and sanitation infrastructure, as well as water-quality surveillance facilities and monitoring systems.

DCA Celebrates 100 Years Of Hope And Action

2022 marks the 100th anniversary of DanChurchAid’s work to save lives, build resilient communities, and fight extreme inequality worldwide. To celebrate this, Nepal office organized an event incorporating the sharing of its next five years Country Programme Strategy (CPS) 2022-2026.

The chief guest of the event was Manoj Bhatta, General Secretary of Social Welfare Council and the Chair was Marco Aviotti, Country Director who welcomed everyone to the event. A short video show on DCA journey and cake cutting ceremony was held to mark the anniversary. A presentation of DCA’s journey in Nepal and synopsis of the CPS was presented by Samjhana Bista, Head of Programmes,

followed by short remarks by representative from the NGO partner and AIN.

The event concluded with a gallery walk which comprised photos of all three thematic pillars of DCA.



World Bank Approves \$100 Million To Support Key Reforms For Nepal

The World Bank’s Board of Executive Directors today approved a \$100 million development policy credit (DPC) to help improve the enabling environment for Nepal’s green, climate-resilient, and inclusive development pathway. This is the first in a programmatic series of three DPCs on Green, Resilient and Inclusive Development (GRID).

“In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Bank has pivoted its program in Nepal to focus support to the Government to pursue a greener, more inclusive, and more resilient development path, said Faris Hadad-Zervos, World Bank Country Director for Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. “Through this operation, we are supporting the Government’s key policy actions across sectors including water, land use, agriculture, forest, urban, waste, and pollution.”

This first operation supports strategic GRID transitions that help build and maintain prosperity for all. This includes the sustainable and productive use of natural capital; strengthening the resilience of urban and rural infrastructure, human capital, and livelihoods to climate and environmental risks; and promoting more efficient and cleaner production, consumption, and mobility.

The operation also supports reforms for strengthening inclusion in development decision-making and access to assets and services; and encourages private sector investment in greening Nepal’s economy and creating jobs and livelihoods related to such areas as community forestry, agriculture, clean air, and solid waste management.

“Nepal’s shift to the GRID approach is a strategic move during a challenging era that is full of opportunity. This shift will help the country continue to make progress on expanding and protecting prosperity while reducing poverty in the face of compounding challenges that affect Nepal’s development, including COVID, disaster, climate and environmental risks,” said Steve Danyo, Sector Leader for Sustainable Development for Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka, and the Task Team Leader for the operation. “The GRID DPC supports Nepal’s shift to a more sustainable, resilient, and inclusive economy.”

Germany To Continue Bilateral Cooperation With Nepal Beyond 2023



The German Embassy in Nepal has informed that the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) of the Federal Republic of Germany has decided to continue with the bilateral development cooperation with Nepal beyond 2023.

On June 26th the German Ambassador Dr. Thomas Prinz met PM Deuba to hand over a letter from Germany's Chancellor Olaf Scholz suggesting to continue Germany's support to Nepal's development efforts in the following core areas: Sustainable Economic Development, Climate and Energy, and Health and Social Protection.

According to a press release issued by the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Kathmandu, German Ambassador Dr. Thomas Prinz said: "I am extremely happy that the German Government has decided to continue bilateral development cooperation with Nepal. It gives us the chance to jointly tackle important challenges like climate change."

Representatives of Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development BMZ will be coming for official government to government dialogue within 2022.



Nepal and Germany have a long-standing bilateral cooperation for over 60 years. German Development Cooperation has been supporting Nepal's efforts in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Immediate

support was also provided for COVID-19 response. Since September 2021, Germany has supported Nepal's shift to a green, resilient, and inclusive development (GRID) pathway as signed on the Kathmandu Declaration on GRID, endorsed by the Government of Nepal and 17 Development Partners.

German bilateral support in Nepal is implemented primarily by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB) for Technical Cooperation as well as Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW) for Financial Cooperation.

Germany greatly appreciates Nepal's engagement for a rule-based international order, as well as for peace and stability in South Asia and around the world. The Federal republic of Germany and the Government of Nepal are bound by shared values, in particular our commitment to democracy, human rights and multilateralism.

India's SJVN Hands 669 MW Lower Arun DPR To Nepal Investment Board

Satlaj Jal Vidhut Nigam (SJVN) has submitted the Detailed Project Report of 669 MW Lower Arun Project, the cascade project of Arun III project.

Satlaj Jal Vidhut Nigam, a Government of India Undertaking or Company, is also constructing Arun III which will likely generate power from next year. The government in its annual policies and program has announced to start the construction from this fiscal year.

According to DPR, the cost of project will be IRS 48 Billion and Nepali Rs. 76 Billion. The project is in the process of Project Development Agreement.

The meeting of the Investment Board Nepal (IBN) on 29 January decided to award the project to the SJVN under the build, own, operate and transfer (BOOT) delivery method to develop the 679 megawatt Lower Arun Hydropower Project.

SJVN of India; and joint venture of Green Resources Ltd and Electrical Power Development Company is to develop the project which has an installation capacity of 900 MW.

Similar to the Arun III hydel project, which will provide 21 per cent free power to Nepal during the concession period, the developer of the Lower Arun hydel project should also prioritize providing certain percent of power free of cost, according to the IBN.



The project cost for Lower Arun is estimated at over 7 billion Nepalese rupees. As per the initial study conducted by Brass Power, the installed capacity of the project can be enhanced to around 1,000 MW if it is developed as a storage-type project.

In September 2019, India had expressed interest to construct the Lower Arun Hydropower Project.

Minister of State for Power, R.K. Singh, had put forth a proposal that the Lower Arun project can be developed by adopting the same model of 900-MW Arun III project.

The developer will hand over the ownership of the project to the government of Nepal after 20 years of commercial operation.

NICCI Welcomes Start Of 'Bharat Gaurav Tourist Train'

Nepal-India Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NICCI) has welcomed the start of 'Bharat Gaurav Tourist Train' connecting Safdarjung, New Delhi along with other religious sites related to Ramayan circuit of India to Janakpur Dham, Nepal.

For the promotion of Nepal-India religious tourism with different religious pilgrimage circuits, NICCI had proposed the agenda for the development of religious circuits connecting both the countries during the joint working group meeting for the promotion of bilateral tourism held in Kathmandu on July 8, 2018 which was endorsed by both Nepal and India side delegations during the JWG meeting, as per a media release.

Currently, NICCI is at the final stage of developing a coffee table book and website including five religious circuits namely Shiva-shakti Circuit, Mahabharat Circuit, Ramayan Circuit, Buddhist Circuit and Sikh Circuit, as per a media release.



Uncomfortable Truths About Climate Change



BY: DIPAK GYAWALI

Concerns are growing about climate change impacts but they are not anywhere near the required level of worry either nationally or globally. An indicator of this anxiety was, in the last two weeks, Water Aid Nepal inviting me to discuss its implications for their work in the years ahead, and ICIMOD launching its new springshed initiative to tackle the scourge of springs drying across the Hindukush-Himalaya. Research of the last decade and a half by Nepal Water Conservation Foundation has found ample instance of this slow cancer decimating hill life and its agricultural base; but climate change, while sure to exacerbate the malaise in the decades ahead, is not the primary driver behind this catastrophe.

The primary culprit behind springs drying is mal-development: misuse of seductive new technologies of electrical and diesel pumping, leading to wanton over-pumping way beyond natural recharge that maintained the overall water balance; ease of transporting water through difficult terrain beyond the springshed with PVC pipes; gouging of fragile hill sides and their natural water channels with badly constructed hill roads dubbed “bulldozer terrorism” by villagers that also contribute to increasing landslides; outmigration of able-bodied youth leading to precipitous decline in livestock keeping as well as hill agriculture and, as a devastating corollary, the neglect of buffalo-wallowing ponds that provided groundwater recharge; as well as the shift from dryland crops to high water consuming vegetables for export – requiring even more pumping of groundwater. If these drivers of mal-development are not addressed and rectified, climate change impacts in the decades ahead will be even more severe than they need be.

What the climate change debate is doing is exposing uncomfortable truths about development as propagandized and practiced in Nepal’s case over the last century, but globally since the Industrial Revolution. It is also revealing societal complexities and institutional weaknesses that are not at all amenable to easy fixes by technical expertise or conventional development interventions. Indeed, they are more part of the problem than potential solutions, especially when climate change is used as a blanket cover explanation to ignore or even hide mal-development drivers, allowing politicians North and South to look good speechifying about it while not having to do anything concrete during their short term in office.

If climate change is such an existential threat to humanity, why is it that we limit concerns about it to one week of COP discussions per year? And for the rest of the year, why is it confined to academic debates only within the UN

IPCC scientific crowd? Even worse, why does the international development industry try to look even better than the politicians funding them by forcing every size of development foot into one-size climate change shoe, ignoring any self-reflection as to why their development experiments have often failed badly over the last three-quarters of a century? As a wry Nepali expression has it: “*My buffalo did not give milk this morning: it must be climate change!*” More likely, you probably did not give it enough fodder or water; but the climate change excuse sure helps you assuage your conscience.

That the climate change debate and campaign are not taking the right direction was a concern I shared with my friend late Steve Rayner when I last met him in November 2019 after our “How Engineers Think” Oxford Workshop. Obsession with average global temperature is not of much help when it is increasing intensity and frequency of extreme weather events such as cloudbursts and wildly swinging polar vortexes that people from the tropics to the arctic have to cope with – and about which there is so little scientific work. Talk of adaptation has remained just that, mere talk, given how complex are myriad human societies across different ecological zones of the world. It is even worse in places like Nepal where interest of international scientific and development community is confined at best to studying glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs) ignoring much more damaging bishyaris that are landslide-dammed lakes in the mid-hills where snow rarely falls. At worst, it confines itself to “policy impact” work, essentially funding not serious science but junketeering for politicians and senior bureaucrats, but doing nothing about Nepal’s alarming increase in fossil-fuel addiction.

Given that the climate change problem (with atmospheric global warming) was created by the energy sector, solutions (proposed fossil fuel use mitigation) are sought almost exclusively within it and not in other impacted sectors. For instance, society is impacted by climate change through the water sector with too much water, too little water, water at the wrong place and time and so on. But the water sector has been rather delinquent in coming up with its solution to the climate crisis, even though the impact is felt in areas as wide apart as agriculture, infrastructure design, migration of plant and human disease vectors etc.

Even within the water sector, there is the hegemony of Blue Water (concentrated surface water in rivers and lakes) that does not allow proper addressing of mal-development and climate change issues. Blue Water’s international transboundary concerns dominate the discourse and research funding when we should be more serious about better under-

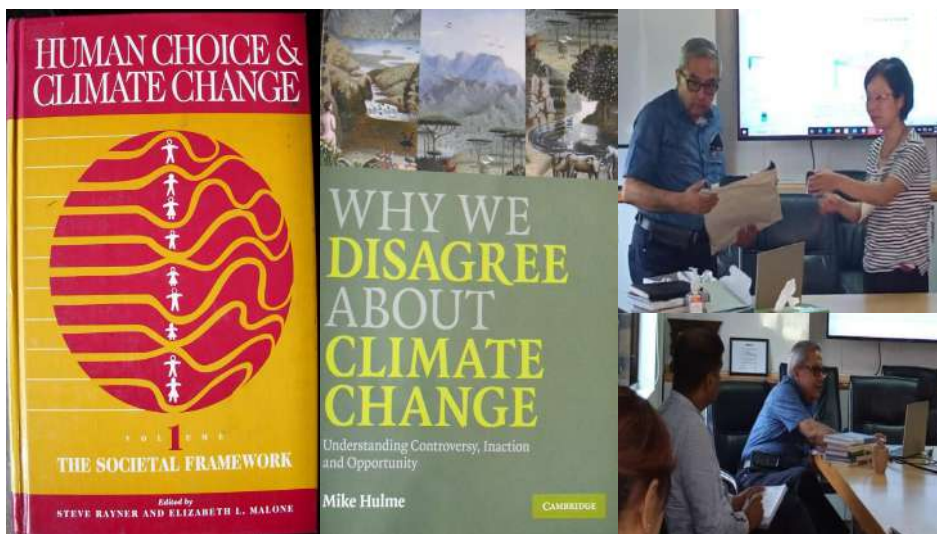
standing White Water (in the atmosphere as “sky rivers”); worrying about the desiccating impact of global temperature rise on Green Water (soil moisture on which all our forests, wildlife and non-irrigated food depend); upset about the rampantly mined and polluted Brown Water (stored groundwater on which most human settlements depend for drinking water); recycling Grey Water (domestic wastewater with mostly organic pollutants); and preventing Black Water (highly polluted with toxic chemical wastes) from mixing with and degrading the other waters.

This quixotic myopia has arisen because the entire climate debate has been hijacked and hegemonized by policy monism focused exclusively on mitigation via bureaucratic procedural fetishism. And even here, the proposed solution of reducing fossil fuel consumption by 2050 by the amount and time-frame suggested is scientifically inadequate to keep the warming to below 1.5° Celsius. It is merely a consensus number deemed to be politically feasible by leaders of the Industrial North! The Global Industrialized North, in its un-reflexive worship of the unbridled market that has been the primary source of the climate problem, has weirdly proposed (as the notorious [Larry Summers memo](#) demonstrates) dispersing pollution to the “under-polluted Global South through “carbon trading”!

How did we come to this sorry state? The Kyoto Protocol of 1997 operationalizing UNFCCC, for all its shortcomings, did manage to include the moral dimension of “equal but differentiated responsibilities”, i.e., that the Industrialized North created the problem since the 1850s and must bear a greater burden than the non-industrialized Global South. Sadly, between then and the global financial crisis of 2008, Industrial North has done everything in its powers to dilute its responsibility through legal and diplomatic means, quibbling over “bracketed texts” and all that at various COP gatherings. Its promise in 2009 Copenhagen climate conference of allocating \$100 billion a year to help developing countries tackle the effects of climate change has come to nothing. At the 2021 COP26 in Glasgow, this pledge was further postponed to 2023! Now, with Ukraine, Industrial

North going back to coal with a vengeance, and the looming global recession, they might as well have pledged the moon, even as that “equal but differentiated responsibilities” moral burden has now morphed into “loss and damage” claims, no matter that its actual redeeming might take as long as that of reparations for slavery.

These uncomfortable questions were raised in a seminal 4-volume study *Human Choice and Climate Change* between 1993 and 1998 led by Steve Rayner mentioned earlier and [Elizabeth Malone](#). For the first (and sadly almost the last) time, it had the



Why Climate Change is a Wicked Problem

social sciences look seriously at how they responded academically and policy-wise to climate change. Despite being sponsored by luminary institutions such as the US Department of Energy, Pacific North-West Lab, IIASA, NOAA, Korea Energy Economics Institute, Japan’s RTE, and many others, its findings exposed such uncomfortable knowledge that they were politely ignored, until Mike Hulme, the founding director of Tyndall Center for Climate Change Research, brought them up in his book [Why We Disagree About Climate Change](#). In short, Hulme argues that as multi-hued humans in very diverse social groupings in many different ecological zones, we disagree about climate change and what should be done about it because we worry about very different things!

Editors and multi-country authors of *Human Choice and Climate Change* make [Ten Suggestions for Policy Makers](#) that are as relevant now as then. They lie in bringing in other more locally rooted social sciences than just narrow, efficiency-focused market economics to understand impact on local communities and how they will adapt with their more ingrained values; in realizing the limits on national planning, that too focused merely on fossil fuel use mitigation; and in understanding that institutional limits to global sustainability, despite technological advancements, will be reached long before environmental limits are breached. In short, social collapse will have occurred long before the very worst-case environmental scenarios of climate change will come into effect!

ELECTION COMMISSION

In Need Of Policy

Although Nepal has been holding elections for over seven decades, one may find it strange to know that Nepal does not have a national election policy. The EC in Nepal has been recommending the election date, preparing for the day and holding the elections in its own way. This time, too, the EC has recommended parliamentary and provincial elections for November 18 on its own. In the absence of a national policy, haphazard decisions land in controversies. Under the banner of Niti Foundation, a recently published Niti Note, among others, discusses the importance of Election Policy to ensure the elections are free and fair

By KESHAB POUDEL

Along with recommending the date of elections for Federal and Provincial Legislatures, the Election Commission has also demanded a budget of Rs.10 billion to conclude the process.

The demand of the election commission for the budget may be justifiable given its recent experiences of holding local elections. However, civil society leaders, who welcome its recommendations for holding the elections, have criticized the demand of Rs.10 billion.

Former chief election commissioner Bhoj Raj Pokharel issued a statement criticizing the commission

for demanding such a big amount of money to hold the elections. He questioned, “Why does EC need such a big amount of money? Where will it spend it and how?”

Pokharel argued that this kind of demand for big public money by the commission will erode its moral standing and credibility to press political parties to limit their election spending. “To make elections cheaper and fair, EC must start the move by holding the elections at a nominal cost. Why do they need new vehicles at this critical time?” asked Pokharel.

This is not the first time EC has landed in controversy. During the

last local elections, EC had withdrawn its demand for 500 new vehicles to increase mobility.

This kind of controversy has been regular. Five years ago, chief election commissioner Ayodhi Prasad Yadav landed in a big controversy over the decision of importing new vehicles for the election commission.

At a time when the country does not have a National Elections Policy, the decisions are often taken haphazardly and randomly. This creates controversy about the intention of the Election Commission.

Published recently by Niti Foundation- a Nepali not-for-profit

public interest organization that accompanies locally-led policy reform, a Niti Note, prepared by eminent constitutional lawyer Professor Dr. Bipin Adhikari discusses different aspects of the election process.

Among others, the areas for policy reforms and policy implementation are highly relevant in the present context.

As Nepal does not have an election policy, the Election Commission has been facing several problems regarding pre-election preparations and post-election scenario.

“Nepal does not have a national election policy. Without this, a holistic approach to elections management is not possible,” said Dr. Adhikari. “A national election policy will be a major instrument to strengthen democracy. This will enable the ECN to focus on elections during the election year and, according to national policy, spend the rest of the time on democratic consolidation.”

This includes focusing on issues such as the protection of electoral integrity, continuous evaluation of electoral standards, working with interest group organizations — non-governmental organizations, media, and law enforcement agencies — for strengthening electoral democracy, working with relevant public or private institutions for the propagation of values that help improve the socio-economic equality, developing a sense of tolerance and respect for each other, creating a sense of accountability, and actively participating in political affairs, according to Adhikari.

“Election management bodies, such as the ECN, are important actors for the promotion and protec-



tion of democracy in any democratic nation. It is, therefore, critical to consider the ways in which the ECN can promote and further strengthen democracy beyond the exercise of a free and fair electoral process,” writes Dr. Adhikari.

“In any democracy, elections are the key to a competitive, plural political system. By exercising adult suffrage, the sovereign people of a democratic country establish their government and institutionalize democratic and accountable governance. It is for this reason that elections are led and conducted in every democratic country by (usually independent) electoral bodies or other such institutions that may accomplish this job independent of the influence of the incumbent government.”

Election Tasks

The realization of constitutional responsibility by any constitutional body is a key to making democracy functional and successful and Nepal is no exception. In the recent days, Election Commission has been doing its best to fulfill its constitutional duties through various processes,

registering new voters, changing addresses and launching programs for voter education.

Although it is still over four months away, the Election Commission has recommended the date of November 18 for the parliamentary and provincial elections. The commission said that it can hold the elections in a single phase. At the meeting of the EC’s officials with Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba at Prime Minister’s residence Baluwatar on July 5, the date for the elections has been recommended.

According to the commissioner at the EC Dr. Janaki Kumari Tuladhar, EC has recommended November 18, Friday, for the elections of the House of Representatives (HoR) and provincial assembly in a single phase.

The commission recommendations has ended speculations and rumors over the date of the election and given political parties opportunities to prepare for the forthcoming elections.

“As a constitutional body created to hold free and fair elections periodically to ensure the right to vote of Nepali citizens and choose the rep-



representatives of their choice to rule, it is our main duty to recommend the date,” said Election Commissioner Ishwori Poudel. “In consultations and interactions with various stakeholders, we come to realize that early recommendations prevent rumors and enhance the credibility of the process.”

Areas for Policy Reform and Policy Implementation

The election is a complex and lengthy process and the recommendation of the date for the election is just one of the tasks. Other tasks are voter registration, transfers, voter ID distribution, printing ballot and so on. However, there is the need of policy reform and policy implementation to strengthen the commission and make the elections free and fair.

“The necessity of independent EMBs for democratic consolidation has been established through the argument in Chapter Two. The argument further makes the case that EMBs should not be limited to performing mere technical roles, but that they should also participate in substantive aspects of democratic consolidation. The analysis has explored the ECN’s case and how the Constitution and the electoral legislative framework provide normative orientation for the Commission to work in the broader arena of democracy protection and promotion. The legal and normative space for the ECN to perform its technical and normative role vis-à-vis electoral administration is a prerequisite but not a sufficient condition for

the Commission to effectively execute its mandate of electoral administration and support Nepal’s democratic consolidation. This is because having legal and normative space does not imply that the space is utilized effectively. This might be due to the Commission’s own inefficiency or constraints put on the Commission by other stakeholders (e.g., government and political parties). Through the elections held in 2017 and 2018 under the new Constitution, the ECN experienced the new Constitution and electoral legislation under it. The ECN reviewed these elections in consultation with various stakeholders in 18 thematic areas. The objective of the review was to document the lessons learned from the recent elections and to gather recommendations for improving electoral

processes in the future. The review focused on elections, but not on the larger democratization perspective. Upon review of the foregone elections and the ECN’s experience, the ECN needs to consider different aspects to better exercise its legal and normative space, and support the consolidation of democracy in Nepal,” the Note writes.

The Note suggests several policy issues the Elections Commission needs to take. These include: Creating a National Election Policy, Streamlining Existing Laws and Procedures, Reforming the Political Parties Act 2017, Ensuring Constant Coordination between the ECN and Political Parties, Implementing Standard Electoral Dispute Resolution Procedures, Regulating and Monitoring Campaign Finance, Providing Regular Civic Education beyond Technical Voter Education and Fostering Inclusion and Participation in Electoral Systems and Processes, Providing Voting Rights to Non-resident Nepalis, Incorporating a NOTA Option and Other Areas for Reform.

Elections Commission’s Role

At a time when some constitutional bodies have been working as shadow bodies of the federal executive and political parties, the Election Commission has asserted its constitutional role by recommending the date for elections.



Out of 13 constitutional commissions, Election Commission is one of the active commissions exercising its constitutional roles and duties.

This is not the first note written by Professor Dr. Bipin Adhikari, of Kathmandu University’s School of Law, for Niti Foundation. In his earlier notes, he had pointed out many serious gaps and lapses in the process of holding the elections.

The two studies, entitled Strengthening Constitutional Bodies for Democracy and Constitutionalism and Strengthening Election Commission in the Regulation of political parties, have revealed many functional and organizational lapses in protecting and promoting marginalized and oppressive communities and their representation in state affairs.

“There is everything in the constitution. However, our problem is still in monitoring and implementation of the constitutional provisions related to the constitutional bodies,” said Mohan Das Manandhar, Executive Director of Niti Foundation “There are problems in accountability, fairness and justice,” said Manandhar.

At the program organized to share the study results with broader stakeholders including the officials from the constitutional bodies, civil society leaders working in the fields, journalists and political leaders, Professor Dr. Adhikari argued that declaring a country of inclusion and distribution of authorities on an inclusive basis, Nepal’s Constitution has provided enormous protection to a marginalized and backward community.

“Along with other state organs, constitutional bodies are important to transform Nepal from an exclusive to an inclusive state. Despite having special constitutional provisions, the constitutional bodies are yet to be inclusive and federal in their

forms.”

In his presentation, Professor Dr. Adhikari said that the Constitution of Nepal 2015 has created 13 independent constitutional bodies with specific mandates. Although some are traditional and others are new, they are created under the separation of powers as fourth branch organs of the state with the overall objective of democracy and constitutionalism.

“Election Commission should work on the basis of its elec-

tions, Chief Elections Commissioner. “There will be no mass feast and parties and other such activities aiming to influence the elections.”

Although the parliament session continues, the Election Commission is reportedly drafting two bills one is related to Election Act and the other is related to the political parties act.

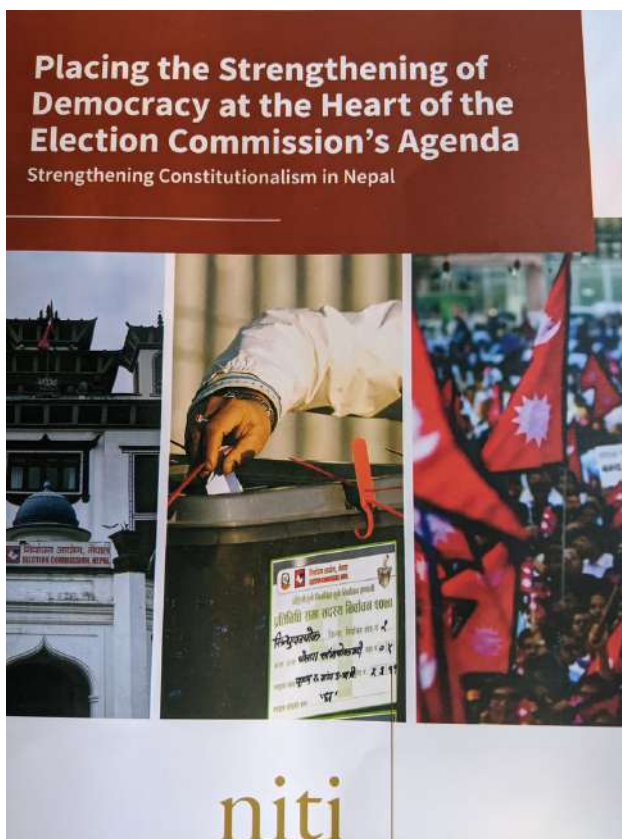
With so many loopholes in the laws governing election and political parties, candidates and political parties have rarely published the exact figure of elections expenditure.

With no strict regulatory mechanism in place, the cost of contesting the elections has gone up many folds and it is impossible for the common party workers to contest the elections.

With the enormous constitutional power and annual budget, everyone aspires to run the local level elections. However, not all have good motives. In the last local elections, more than half of elected local representatives were petty contractors and middle-level contractors. Thus, almost all local-level leaders spent a huge amount of money to purchase excavators in construction of roads.

Looking to the past record of the Election Commission and political parties, stakeholders are demanding complete transparency in the campaign fund and expenditure of political parties.

According to the Constitution of Nepal, Elections Commission is the sole body responsible to regulate and monitor the political parties. Fulfilling its role, the Elections Commission has already announced the code of conduct, which makes it mandatory to show the expenditure for each candidate at the local level.



tions plan and policy. Fiscal independence and functional independence are keys to making the constitutional commission effective and efficient.

“Following the recommendation of date for national elections, we have already announced a number of decisions including drafting a law to make political parties and candidates transparent and accountable in spending money in the elections, right to vote to all including those who live abroad,” said Dinesh Kumar Thapal-

While Koirala Against PR, Maoists For Parliamentary Features



BY: DR. SURESH C. CHALISE

During his last stint as the Prime Minister, from 2006-2008, Koirala's health was, in his own words: "deceptive" in nature. He meant to say, as he did state so on many occasions specifically with the foreign envoys who were startled meeting him in spite of news about his infirm condition; that he looked apparently healthier but he was not at bottom. Koirala, naïve about the curse of pulmonary cancer being awfully hostile already against him, was hospitalized a number of times. At one occasion in the evening in Baluwatar, while he was confabulating with the UNMIN's representative, the rumors even reached there about Koirala's death referring Madhav Kumar Nepal- the leader of the UML. The rumor was that Nepal was told by someone at somebody's marriage reception. It prompted Koirala to indirectly appear before the Tv. later in order to falsify the gossips. As a matter of fact, in spite of high and lows in his health conditions, Koirala successfully headed most of the negotiations between government and CPN-M and also major decisions of the Seven Party at Baluwatar, in the PM's official residence, which then was a hub of political activities and international affairs of the country.

PR Electoral System:

Like, in the case of most of other negotiations, an unwritten scheduled was made for the negotiation, specifically on the electoral system and model of polity to be adopted by the country. After all the participants assembled in a morning in Baluwatar, PM Koirala and Rebel leaders PK Dahal and Dr. BR Bhattarai occupied their seats which were arranged face to face. While the PM was flanked by his team members that included Dr Shekhar Koirala, home minister KP Sitaula, and the author as PM's foreign affairs adviser, the Maoist leadership was accompanied only by Bhattarai. The dialogue was taking place at the adjacent room of the PM's bedroom.

After the PM opened the dialogue for negotiation, Prachand, at the outset, said "Girijababu, we want that some historic works, which are in the interest of the nation, are carried out through your hands." PM and his team did not respond to his opening statement. Instead, PM, overlooking his soothing remarks, asked rebels to enter into the agenda of the electoral system to be embraced by the country. Then, the Maoist leaders both in one voice pleaded in favor of cent percent Proportional Representation Electoral system. The PM was tight leaped and just lent his ears to the arguments of the Maoist leaders. Their argu-

ments mostly were centred around the theoretical perspectives such as that the PR system would enable representations of the downtrodden sections of society in the parliament while

the First-Past the Post system was a bourgeois form of electoral system. But, at bottom, all members of the Prime Minister's side had knowledge that the Maoists, as they were unsure about their victory in the forthcoming electoral battle, were clandestinely lobbying for the PR system with other parties in the legislature as well with the request that the PR electoral system would help them to secure some more seats in the legislature. The PM, who was not in favor of PR system, neither spoke a word in favor or against the PR system. Home Minister KP Sitawla and Dr Shekhar Koirala, however, put their point of view for the First-Past-The-Post system. They were in favor of electoral system alike of Westminster model, which was already practiced in Nepal in the past after 1990's political change and neighboring India too had been practicing the system successfully for decades. As a matter of fact, junior Koirala and Sitaula's deep-rooted understanding was that the electoral fray, sans PR system, would benefit the NC ultimately as the communist forces- Maoists and UML, were viciously competing with each other in the upcoming CA elections.

But, to the dismay of the rebel leaders, the PM was unrevealing! When the author saw a kind deadlock and the dialogue teams were not concluding on the 1st agenda, he had to venture in favor of the PR system! The tactical move was not motivated only to keep the former insurgents incessantly engaged in the peace process but was also for other reasons. The author argued it, amid silence, "Although, the PR system of representation is somewhat different than the Westminster model, it has been successfully practiced in the democratic setups as well. For instance in Germany!" The author had courage to cite the example of Germany because he had not only worked on his post-doctoral research availing AvH Fellowship in Germany but also had written a monograph on "Political Acculturation in Germany," which dwelt faintly also on the PR system of Federal Republic of Germany.

Immediately, it was difficult to know how the PM and others on his side took the author's points of view, but the Maoist leaders were seemingly in jubilant mood. As bottom, the Maoist leaders never ever expected that such an argument would be passed-in from the side of the PM. The

high spirited Maoist Chief Prachand once again pursued the reticent PM by saying, “Girija Babu.. We are not asking for something which is undemocratic and crossed out by democratic nations.” The PM was still silent and so were three of his members. But, the PM, sensing that the negotiation tempo was in very lower spirit, hinted his affirmation to the PR electoral system through the gesture of commanding all to move on the next issue pertaining to the taxonomy of the democracy (La aba arko agenda ma jaw).

On Parliamentary Democracy:

The second agenda of negotiation was about the taxonomy of the democracy that country should embrace

gloomy picture. The country has been failed to propel itself on the path of linear progress. Instead, over these long years, whereas the PR system has been misused in favor of toadies and rich men by major political forces, the democratic institutions too are put in doldrums since the three organs of the state: executive, legislature and judiciary, are beset by anomie and aberrations. The consequences are that while nation’s economy is in shaky state, as according to CEIC data, Nepal had total \$ 30.927 billion in Jul 2021 while the external debt accounted for \$ 8.8 billion in December of same year; the political forces, which had agreed



for. Now, both the camps’ attention was focused on the subject, which was relating to the political system of the country. In other words, how the polity of the country would be introduced to the world: whether the system as such would be introduced as the Parliamentary Democracy or something else? On this issue, the government side had one voice and argued in favor of Parliamentary Democracy. But, the Maoist leaders outright yet vociferously rejected the terminology! Later, following a long discourse, the latter agreed to accept all the features of Parliamentary Democracy but not ready to accept the term *Parliamentary Democracy* as such. They, perhaps, did that in order for the consumption of their radical cadres within the CPN-M.

While recalling these episodes, yet on the auspicious occasion of the birth anniversary of late GP Koirala, as Nepal has not only exercised for years the mixed PR system but also inclusive democracy oriented towards the socialism; it is disheartening to note the nation’s current

to the 2015 constitution, now are up for other new political agendas such as Presidential or direct election to the Prime Minister.

GP Koirala had, in spite of his strong reservations, succumbed to the PR electoral system, which was bound to evolve the coalition politics, only with the hope that country would be developing a culture of unity, cooperation and politics of consensus among parties in the country. But, in reality, the coalition politics has been parodied contrary to the expectation of Koirala. The general perception about contemporary coalition governments in the country has been awful. In such a piteous situation, the primary stakeholders of the country must awake, rise, ponder over and strive for the corrective measures against nation’s challenges sooner than later; otherwise, Nepal is ordained to sliding down further.. alas!

Dr. Suresh C. Chalise served as the PM GPK’s Foreign Affairs Adviser. This article is part of my book titled, “An account of Nepal’s Peace Process” in progress.

Can Nepal's Economy Go Sri-Lanka Way?

As Nepal is facing a severe economic crisis with declining balance of payment, leaders of four ruling coalition partners led by Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba visited Nijgadh, expressing their commitment to build Asia's biggest international Airport, clearing the pristine rain forest and destroying a habitat of endangered Asiatic Elephants.

By KESHAB POUDEL

Prime Minister Deuba, Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda, UML-US leader Madhav Kumar Nepal and Madheshi leader Upendra Yadav visited the site defying the order of Supreme Court, which issued mandamus not to construct international airport in surrounding areas. Backed by main opposition party leader K.P. Sharma Oli, constructing the 4.5 billion dollar international airport is a consensus project of all political parties.

With over 6 billion dollars in foreign currency reserve, nobody needs to have doubts about economy of Nepal given consensus for the construction of mega project like international airport at the cost of pristine forest of the world.

After hearing over three years, a full bench presided by five justices of Supreme Court has issued the order to stop the activities. Senior justices Hari Krishna Karki, Bish-

wombher Shrestha, Ishwori Prasad Khatiwada, Prakash Man Singh Raut and Dr. Manoj Kumar Sharma delivered the verdict analyzing entire issues regarding the international airport.

Having recently completed two international airports in Bhairawa and Pokhara, spending over 100 billion rupees, Nepal's scarce resources have always been under strain. Similarly, over 50 billion rupees were spent in the last three years just to construct the view towers in the rural municipalities. Over 150 billion rupees Kathmandu-Terai fast track is currently under construction. However, the project received Rs.20 billion against its demand of Rs.40 billion. Under a state restructuring program, Rs.60 billion has already spent to purchase vehicles to provinces and rural and municipalities.

Private sectors are also wasting the resources investing in unproductive sectors like real states and

land. As there is a wave of wasting scarce resources, one cannot rule out the possibility of an economic collapse.

Going through this kind of misuse of resources for the so-called mega projects, one cannot rule out the possibility of Nepal's economic crisis heading on the path of Sri Lanka.

"If we don't work sincerely learning from Sri Lanka, Nepal is inevitable to reach the stage of the economic and political crisis of Sri Lanka. Observing the present scenario, Nepal is following the path of Sri Lanka," tweets former deputy prime minister and senior leader of Maoist Center Narayan Kazi Shrestha.

Aspiring to construct mega projects, improper and inappropriate use of resources, growing import of food stuffs, petroleum products and declining tourism flow and internal production, Shrestha's concerns are valid.



showing Nepal's economic indicators including balance of payment is deteriorating further, Minister of Information, Communication Technology Gyanendra Bahadur Karki dismissed all speculations.

"Although some sections are intentionally disseminating the false rumor saying that Nepal is going the way of Sri Lanka, this is completely false. Our economy is in good shape and the government has been taking all steps to strengthen the economy of the country. The government is taking all precautionary measures to protect the economy and there is the need of support from all."

Nepal's economy

During the first eight months of the current fiscal year 2021-22, imports increased by 38.6 percent to \$10.7 billion. However, exports totaled \$1.2 billion, resulting in a total trade deficit of \$9.5 billion, accounting for almost 28 percent of Nepal's GDP in 2021. The current account deficit also increased from \$1.29 billion to \$3.88 billion. Nepal finances the current account deficit primarily by trade credit, external concessional loans, and reserve drawdowns.

Of equal concern for Nepal is the reduction in the flow of foreign remittances. Remittances account for more than a quarter of Nepal's GDP. During the early stages of the pandemic, remittances increased despite expectations to the contrary. However, in the first eight months of the current fiscal year, remittances declined by 1.7 percent to \$5.2 billion.

Given the lust of political leadership in mega projects, economists are comparing Nepal's situation with that of Sri Lanka and giving a pessimistic view of Nepal's economy.

With the Russia-Ukraine war raging on, the World Bank has revised Nepal's growth projection too. Nepal's economy, led by recovery of the services sector amid high Covid vaccination rates, is expected to grow by 3.7 percent in the current fiscal year and 4.1 percent in the next year.

This may shave Nepal's eco-

Governor of Nepal Rasta Bank Maha Prasad Adhikari also said that Nepal needs to take drastic steps urging business community to prepare to pay higher interest rates. "Only through joint efforts of all of us, we can save our economy," said Governor Adhikari, replying to queries at the Finance Committee of House of Representatives.

Warnings are coming from senior leaders of ruling party, governors, economists and civil society leaders.

Is Nepal going the way of Sri Lanka?

Nepal may not be in quite such dire straits as Sri Lanka for now. Nepal has much less debt, equal to almost 50 percent of GDP. By comparison, Sri Lanka's debt-to-GDP ratio was 104 percent in 2021.

And tourists are starting to return to the Himalayas, bringing much needed foreign cash to Nepal. In March, Nepal reported 42,000 visitors for the month, the highest monthly total in over two years.

Nepal has surplus of hydro-electricity, bio-mass contributes over 72 percent in energy consumption and over 80 percent population in rural Nepal live in subsistence farming. Unlike rural subsistence domi-

nated economy of Nepal, Sri Lanka's economy is urban.

Remittance inflow has been recorded to be Rs 904 in the first 11 months of the current fiscal year 2021-22.

As reported by the Nepal Rastra Bank, remittance inflow has increased by 3.8 percent according to the macroeconomic data for the first 11 months of the current fiscal year.

According to the central bank, remittances had increased by 12.6 percent in the same period last year. Remittance inflow on the US Dollar has reached Rs 7.51 billion with a rise of 1.5 percent. Last year the inflow had upped by 10.5 percent.

Alarmed by the developments in Sri Lanka and the worsening economic scenario in Nepal, the government and Central Bank have already taken some preventive measures.

On April 26, the government formally banned the import of 10 luxury or non-essential goods till mid-July 2022 and the government has already announced to extend it till remarkable progress in economy.

At a time when economists and officials are warning the possibility of Nepal heading towards an economic crisis like that of Sri Lanka



economic growth by an estimated 0.2 and 0.6 percentage points in the current fiscal year 2021-22 and the next fiscal year 2022-23 from previous projections according to the World Bank.

Inflation And Rising Food Prices

Rising food prices driven by cost of transportation, a growing trade deficit, burgeoning debt, and decreasing domestic revenue are some of worrisome indicators. These are not good signs for any country recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Now Nepal is facing a credit crunch situation due to the liquidity crisis. The CD ratio of almost all banks has crossed over 90 per cent, and they are unable to lend money to the clients.

Deposit interest rates having surged heavily during this period, the deposits are not significant enough. The government is unable to utilize its

tolerance of 5 percent. The inflation eased to 6 percent as of April this year.

Inflation hurts the fixed-income groups, workers in informal sectors, small businesses, and the poor the most. An economist said that combined with higher unemployment, rising inflation will push more people below the poverty line, household debt will also rise, and spending cuts will follow.

Food prices contributed to about 60 percent to the overall inflation and non-food contributed to 20 percent in 2021.

The finance ministry in the budget report stated that the rising cost of fuel will have a ripple effect that can cause a significant trade shock. Similarly, the rising cost of goods is likely to affect manufacturing competitiveness and impact investment prospects.

Fiscal deficit

budget as proposed, and cash flow into the Nepal's economy is seriously affected.

Nepal's consumer price inflation accelerated from 5.6 percent in 2020 to 7.8 percent in 2022, which was above the Nepal Rastra Bank's upper

Nepal's fiscal deficit has been widening over the years. The fiscal deficit is growing since last few years and it is likely to reach around 7 percent of GDP in this fiscal year.

With dwindling domestic revenue, the deficit is projected to further widen at an all-time high which is above 10 percent of GDP in the fiscal year 2022-23 of the total expenditure estimated.

According to the finance ministry, the deficit would be financed through net external concessional borrowing of and net domestic borrowing (treasury bills and long-term government bonds).

The deficit was observed because of the shortfalls in the domestic revenue collection and increased spending requirements related to the pandemic. According to the budget report, the ministry targets to contain the fiscal deficit below 5 percent of the GDP during fiscal year 2022-23.

Trade deficit

Department of Customs report of the first 11 months showed that the amount of the imports soared by 27.5 per cent to Rs 1,763.2 billion in comparison to the same period of the previous FY which is the major cause of outflow of the liquidity.

Rising prices of goods and increasing imports is already widening the country's current account deficit (CAD). The CAD was projected to widen from 12.4 percent of GDP in the fiscal year 2020-21 to 23.6 percent of GDP in this fiscal year.





Moreover, the trade deficit which is the largest component of CAD was estimated to widen from 7.1 percent in the fiscal year 2020-21 to 17.8 percent of GDP in the fiscal year 2021-22. This was attributed to a decline in energy generation and lower exports and a significant increase in imports.

As an import-dependent economy with a pegged exchange rate, any depreciation of the Indian rupee versus the US dollar raises the cost of imports from third countries. However, the pegged exchange arrangement is in favor of Nepal as more than 80 percent of its trade is with India.

Foreign currency reserves

As a result, Nepal's gross foreign exchange reserves decreased to \$9.58 billion from \$11.75 billion. As a result, its foreign exchange reserves are sufficient to cover prospective merchandise and services imports for just 6-7 months.

Widening current account deficits eats into the foreign currency reserves. The gross international reserve is estimated to deplete.

Its repercussion was reflected when the NRB report showed that the foreign exchange reserve declined by Rs. 252.1 billion in the period between mid-July 2021 and mid-May 2022 indicating that this much amount returned to central bank from the economy in lieu of foreign currency

outflowed from the country.

Liquidity Crisis

The current fiscal year (FY) is coming to an end witnessing the depletion of liquidity in the bank and financial institutions (BFIs) for the whole of the FY.

The Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) accounted for excess liquidity on an average of Rs 10 billion in the last 10 days in the end of mid-June 2022, which remains far below compared to Rs 125 billion recorded in mid-July 2021.

Consequently, the shortage of liquidity has triggered a spike in interest rates. The macroeconomic and financial situation published by NRB showed that weighted average interest on loans shot up from 8.53 per cent in mid-May 2021 to 11.42 per cent in the end of mid-May 2022.

The low excess liquidity on the account of the NRB signals that the BFIs have been operating under the shortage of liquidity since the beginning of the running FY. The shortage has spurred the short-term interest rates as well as the long-term.

Nepal-India Pegged Cur-

rency Exchange

Unlike Sri Lanka, Nepalese currency is pegged to Indian currency for a greater financial stability. Nepal has been following a pegged exchange rate system with the Indian rupee with periodic exchange rate corrections through revaluation or devaluation.

Nepalese currency pegged to India currency is in a greater advantage in the time of the major crisis like the current one. Nepal Rastra Bank pegged the Nepali rupee to the Indian rupee and fixed the exchange rate at 160 Nepali rupees for Indian 100 rupees. Such a provision entailed that the Nepal Rastra Bank could buy and sell any amount of Indian rupees at the given exchange rate.

The last adjustment that was made between the two currencies was on February 1, 1993, when the earlier exchange rate of Nepali rupees 160 equivalent to Indian rupees 100 was revived. Thus, for quite a long time the exchange rate between the Nepali and Indian rupees has been largely the same, despite the fact that the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act 1962 allowed the convertibility of Nepali rupees with all other currencies.

The pegging of the Nepali rupee with the Indian rupee is in Nepal's greater national interest. There is overwhelming consensus within Nepal on pegging issue.



COVERSTORY

The economic instability in Nepal is being kept within manageable limits since the Nepali rupee is pegged to the Indian rupee. Former governor of Nepal Rasta Bank. Yuva Raj Khatiwada said that the Nepali currency is strengthening only because it is pegged to the Indian currency.

At a time when Nepal's political leaders are lured to mega projects, they would have destroyed Nepal's currency market for the sake of individual interest.

Nepal's Proximity With India



Every country has its own distinguished economic, political, and social fundamentals. Different states have different natures, also determined by their position and geography.

Having closer geographical, cultural and civilization ties and open border with India, Nepal is situated siding with it. It is a big safeguard of Nepal and it is also sometimes a matter of friction. Nepal's destiny is guided by its south facing nature. In the words of late NC leader Krishna Prasad Bhattarai "Bharat Mukhi" which many Nepalese nationalists do oppose? However, it is a reality. One may have like and dislike but no one can change the destiny.

Nepal has been an integral part of Indian religion, culture, and society. Nepalese people form a big

chunk of Indian Army too. The location and interconnected threads of Nepal and India make it the most important neighbor for India.

Experts argue that India will never like Nepal economy to fall so that external forces may take advantage of it. That's why in addition to a 750 million USD line of credit started in 2016, India is already executing another 1.65 billion USD projects in Nepal under line of credit. Another one-billion-dollar worth projects are in pipeline too.

Nepal vis-à-vis Sri Lanka

Fortunately, Nepal may not be in quite such dire straits as Sri Lanka. The former country has much less debt, equal to almost 50 percent of GDP. By comparison, Sri Lanka's debt-to-GDP ratio was 104 percent in 2021.

Currently, the Sri Lankan financial crisis is causing political turmoil and unrest. It is "debt trapped" and is deemed incapable of repaying its international debt obligation.

In this context, some economists of Nepal are comparing Nepal's situation with that of Sri Lanka and giving a pessimistic view of Nepal's economy. However, Nepal's financial indicators as such suggest that it won't face a situation as severe as Sri Lanka's.

The government and Nepal

Rastra Bank have already taken proactive financial measures to stabilize its foreign currency reserve. Nepal's present currency reserve is capable of covering imports of about six-and-half months, a slightly alarming foreign currency position but not worrisome if certain financial measures are taken.

Nepal's foreign debt is not at an alarming level, and its repayment of foreign loans can be met from the current foreign currency reserve. Further, Nepal has taken foreign loan at nominal interest rate with longer payback

period, which gives assurance of not immediately running out of currency reserves. In the last two months, inflows of remittance have started picking up.

The tourism industry has started to bounce back, which is another major source of Nepal's foreign exchange. Meanwhile, the government and the central bank have imposed import restrictions to tackle Nepal's trade imbalance.

Nepal's economic situation is nowhere close to Sri Lanka's, despite trends to the contrary. Firstly, Nepal does not depend upon tourism as much as Sri Lanka. Besides, it removed all pre-arrival testing requirements for fully vaccinated travelers and this has contributed to tourism rebounding.

However, Nepal shares some long-term problems that have dogged Sri Lanka, which contributed to the crisis on the island. If the current leaders continue to dream to build mega-projects like Nijgadh, Trans-Himalayan Railway, Fast Track, East-west high speed railway and others and promote corruption as they are in Sri Lanka, even god cannot save Nepal from economically going bankrupt.

(Based on the data and information compiled from various media and newspapers)

Year 2020/021

NEA's Dark Year

With an abrupt decision of then Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli, Kul Man Ghising, managing director of Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), discontinued for a year. However, the year under a new management cost billions of rupees of loss to NEA

By A CORRESPONDENT

If the recently published Audit Report 2022 of Nepal Electricity Authority by Auditor General is any indication, it shows how costly for the organization like NEA it was in replacing the existing dynamic and dedicated head abruptly.

Serving four years as a managing director of NEA (2016-2020), Kul Man Ghising had transformed NEA into a profitable public entity ending decades old load shedding. After taking the position of MD, Ghising had reduced the electricity leakage from 24 to 15.

However, his one year absence was costly to the institution. As he left NEA in August 2020 July and Hitendra Dev Shakya took charge as new MD, the process of NEA's decline started. The audit period between July 2020-July 2021 showed how NEA was heading to a financial collapse.

The Auditor General's Annual Report 2022 showed that NEA suffered from high leakage, low profits and high remnant in the fiscal year of 2020-2021 (2077/078).

Submitted to President Bidhya Devi Bhandari by Auditor General Tankamani Sharma Dangel, the annual report of the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) for the fiscal year 2077-78 BS (2020-21) highlighted various transaction, performance and finance related issue of various government organizations including NEA.

According to the report, all

financial indicators, which were upward and positive previously, were suddenly on the backtrack causing negative results in the fiscal year of 2020-021.

According to the 59th Annual Report published on July 13, NEA's leakage increased to 1.19 in the audit period of 2020-021 compared to the previous years. The report pointed out that the leakage was 15.99 in fiscal year 2077/079 and targeted to bring it down to 13.50. The report also pointed out NEA's adamance to evaluate the situation hiring independent experts to improve the situation.

According to the report, NEA has made net profit of 10.05 billion rupees (Rs.10,05,000,000) in the fiscal year (2076-077), However, NEA's profit margin shrunk Rs. 7.68 billion (7,68,69,000,000) in 2077-78.

NEA has earned Rs. 71, 290,000,000 selling the electricity in the first year 2076-077 and the amount was Rs.70, 860,000,000 in the 2077/078 fiscal year.

In earlier fiscal year, NEA purchased electricity worth of Rs.35, 12, 000,000. However, during the same period in 2077-078, NEA purchased electricity worth of Rs.40, 850,000,000. This is 16.32 percent higher than the previous year. According to the report, NEA had cited reasons for declining internal production and increased the import.

According to report, NEA's own electricity generation in the



fiscal year of 2077-078 was 200.69 gigawatts hour lower than the fiscal year 2076/077. Similarly, IPP's generation had increased by 304.22 gigawatts hour.

The report said that there are ample indications to show that NEA's generation declined because the water was dumped in the river from the dam at night. The report said this is sheer wastage of electricity.

The report also said that NEA was unable to refund remnant in fiscal year 2077/078 compared to 2076/077. Compared to a year ago, NEA's remnant has increased by 13.17 percent in this period reaching the amount Rs.36.47 billion. Out of this, the NEA is yet to refund Rs.17.15 billion from 56 customers of feeder line.

According to report, NEA's 47.08 percent of the remnant amount needs refund from the 56 customers connected to the dedicated feeder. With Rs.4.32 billion from street lights, NEA's total remnant amount now is Rs.40.75 billion.

Despite the decision of NEA's board of directors to collect the amount under an installment basis and direction of Public Accounts, NEA was unable to collect the money.

This report is a testimony of best financial performance of MD Ghising and after his successor's period.



Water Management In Mountains: Snow Water As An Alternative



Introduction

We were taught that Ne-

pal is the richest country in water resources after Brazil. The secretary at the ministry of energy, water resources, and irrigation, speaking at a CGIAR Research Portfolio Launch and Stakeholder Dialogue Program recently, argued that Nepal had an abundance of water, so, there was no water scarcity. In contrast, several studies have revealed that water scarcity is all over Nepal no matter whether that is Tarai, chure, mid-hills, or mountains. But, their forms could be different. The dry spell of winter and early months of monsoon bring scarcity while the monsoon months receive too much water resulting in a lot of disasters and adversities to humans. Considering the average rain and snowfall in Nepal, the question of water scarcity sometimes becomes irrelevant. But the stark reality is that several intersections of Nepali villages and urban settlements face an acute shortage of water for several months each year.

Then the question arises why that is happening, and the answers could be several. Here, we will try to contemplate the externalities that are responsible for complicating the life of many people from projects developed under usual scenarios including urban settlement development and water supply schemes, and present a case Laprak as a representative of several others in order to draw the attention of stakeholders.

Present Status

A nationwide survey conducted by Nepal Water Conservation Foundation (NWCF) in 2020 in collaboration with ICIMOD revealed that spring sources were being dried up throughout Nepal aggravating the scarcity. About 74 percent of local government representatives of Chure, mid-hills and mountains of 58 districts opined that they have had dried-up springs

BY: PRATIMA SHARMA AND CHIRANJIBI BHATTARAI

in their area (Dahal et al, 2021). The National Climate Change Im-

pact Survey, 2016 also corroborated the fact that water sources in Nepal were declining in recent decades (CBS, 2017). As per the NWCF survey, Chure was the hardest hit among the three ecological zones and the mountain the least (Fig.1).

Laparak, Gorkha



Our field reconnaissance found that the mountain communities have also been facing water scarcity where snowfall compounded the problem further in addition to the spring drying up in the mountain region. Laprak, the 2015 Earthquake epicenter, developed as an integrated model village situated in Ward No. 4 Gupsipakha of Dharche Rural Municipality (RM), Gorkha has around 600 newly built homes (Fig. 2).

Figure 2: Laprak integrated settlement

The tantalizingly attractive settlement developed in support of NRN led by Sesh Ghale is unable to be a livable village to the locals as envisioned by the proponents. It may be an attractive place for tourists but has failed to attract the beneficiary households. Instead, they have continued living in their villages. One of the major reasons behind it is the disconnect of the features that a mountain community needs. Firstly, it lacks reliable connection of water supply including electricity and roads. The drinking water supply scheme developed for it is brought in from about a 19 km distant source investing 60 million rupees by Care Nepal and Swara Sadan Gau Bikas Kendra, Gorkha gets dry in winter months. Because the winter frigid temperature breaks the collection and distribution pipelines especially from December to March each year. The scheme did not consider the frigid temperature of winter and rainwater harvesting from the CGI sheet roofs while designing.

Dalbir Gurung, a homestay operator in Laprakopines that the water shortage becomes troublesome to those families operating homestays and living temporarily once snowfall starts in winter.

Figure 3: Dalbir Gurung storing water collected from spring

Alternatively, they have a small natural spring just outside the settlement to collect water but that is not enough for the limited number of homestays too.

Figure 4: A spring located at Gupsipakha

Secondly, the model settlement designers did not consider the livelihood aspects of the villagers especially agriculture as an integral part of the people. The irony is that the settlement does not have even a backyard for a kitchen garden and livestock, houses with toilets only.

The water scarcity has limited the scope further of having livelihood opportunities whereas the original Laprak village located downhill of Gupsipakha possesses almost all. It seems still vibrant and connects the local people well with their traditional occupations. Interestingly, the vegetables served in the homestays also come from the older village. As per Santosh



Gurung, then chairperson of Dharche RM, around 40 houses are only occupied mostly by the homestay operators, and the rest houses are left unoccupied. Santosh was exploring livelihood options to make the model settlement habitable and vibrant.

It attracts high-level attention

The water problem has reached to the provincial government of Gandaki province through Dharche RM. The chief minister of Gandaki province Krishna Chandra PokharelNepali, at a program organized in Laprak in March, had promised the residents to resolve the problem soon in response to Santosh Gurung, then chairperson of Dharche RM's request for help.

Figure 5: From the left- Santosh Gurung, Krishna Chandra Nepali and Praksh Dawadi at Gupsipakha

Local wisdom for alternative

Since the snow has become a compounding factor to the water scarcity, we were surprised to see the locals practicing snow harvesting as an alternative. Maya Gurung, a homestay operator in Laprak has been practicing snow harvesting in winters where she uses plastic tanks/drums to store snow and let it melt down. She has to use the snow water for around four months but still, that is not sufficient. "We don't have alternatives other than to harvest snow for water", Maya said. She expressed her profound melancholia on the shortage of water where she finds difficulties in arranging water for guests, and the visitors face WASH-related problem, consequently. For instance, we, the authors having the habit of daily bathing, also had to skip bathing on the day of our stay.

Figure 6: Vessels for water in a toilet of Maya Gurung's homestay

Rainwater harvesting too

The people are in search of water alternatives as the water supply scheme is not going to meet their demands throughout the year. They are also aware of the fact that the topography around the settlement is fragile to construct the larger structures. Therefore, they wonder whether they can construct small ponds and ditches in their area so that they can recharge the springs or explore other alternatives to remedy the water shortage. Dalbir stated that the Laprak community wanted to have appropriate rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge systems alternatives but they did not have the technical knowledge and skills behind it.

Conclusion

Technical solutions to the pipe breakage could be an available but expensive for Nepal. Nobody knows there could be several other nature-based local solutions that the communities have been practicing for ages. Our field observation visit to Laprak found the practice that was locally adaptive and new to us. In the national water debates, rainwater harvesting is rampant and governments at different scales have included it in their annual policies and programs but nobody talked about the snow-water harvesting. More importantly, the snow-water harvesting practiced by the Laprak community can be upscaled and outscored especially in other mountain communities where there is a similar water problem. Therefore, we conclude that the state and communities should adopt and prioritize local traditional knowledge, wisdom and practices like harvesting rainwater and snow water using traditional as well as modern technologies that fit them. These practices should be made an integral part of the water management even in the large-scale projects carefully considered right from the project design.

The authors work at Nepal Water Conservation Foundation (NWCF) as researchers.

SHINZO ABE

A Legacy Ends In Japan

The former prime minister Shinzo Abe has died from his injuries after a shooting at the age of 67. Shinzo Abe resigned from the top post in 2020, but his legacy has had a lasting impact on everyday Japanese life and politics.

Former Japanese leader Shinzo Abe, who was the longest-serving prime minister in Japan's history, died after being shot while delivering a speech at a campaign event in western Japan.

Abe's legacy

During his lifetime, Abe divided opinion across the country. To his critics, Abe represented a conservative Japan, downplaying Japan's wartime atrocities.

In a speech in 2015, when Japan marked 70 years



since its defeat in World War II, Abe expressed “profound grief” for war victims, but stopped short of apologizing.

“The defining element of his career was historical revisionism,” said German historian Sven Saaler of Tokyo's Sophia University. Saaler cited the whitewashing of Japan's wartime past in school textbooks and the reintroduction of morality lessons as prominent examples.

Abe's promises of building a “strong and prosperous Japan” had been reminiscent of the imperialist motto of the Meiji era: “rich nation, strong army.” Abe also sought to revise the pacifist constitution that he believed was imposed on Japan in 1946 by the US.

However, Abe was never able to realize his lifelong dream of reforms. His supporters regarded him as a pragmatic leader who strengthened Japan's economy and partnership with the US “so that Japan would never be relegated to a second-class nation” — as he once said.

Abe sought to relax monetary policy and pursue high government spending, and struck major trade agreements with the European Union and the Pacific Rim countries.

During his tenure, Japan opened up to foreign workers, investors and tourists as never before, and proved that a developed economy can grow despite a shrinking population.

Abe resigned as prime minister in 2020 due to a

chronic health condition that he had battled for years.

Balancing superpowers

Abe also brought Japan closer to other countries in the Asian continent.

With his vision of a “free and open Indo-Pacific,” the politician raised awareness across Asia of China's ambitions abroad and strengthened economic ties between Japan and the region through an aggressive investment policy.

“India and Southeast Asia welcomed a more assertive Japan as a proactive and stabilizing regional influence,” said Yoichi Funabashi, chairman of the Asia Pacific Institute think tank, following Abe's 2020 resignation.

The historic power struggle between China and the US, which escalated significantly during Abe's tenure, forced him to walk a tightrope between the two superpowers. In doing so, he succeeded in both expanding the security alliance with the US, as well as protecting trade with China — Japan's most important economic partner — from damage through an expanded interpretation of the Japanese constitution.

Abe also successfully pitched for Tokyo to host the 2020 Olympic Games, promising that the crippled Fukushima nuclear plant was “under control.”

But Abe had lamented an unfinished peace deal with Russia, with both Tokyo and Moscow still at odds over the fate of the four disputed Kuril Islands.

Abe Shinzo a leading figure in Japanese politics

Shinzo Abe has twice served as Japan's prime minister, and his family's political history stretches back decades. His grandfather, Kishi Nobusuke, served as prime minister between 1957 and 1960. And Abe's father served as foreign minister.

In 1993, Abe ran in a general election following his father's death.

He has since become a leading figure in Japanese politics. As deputy chief cabinet secretary, he visited North Korea with Japan's then-prime minister.

Abe first became leader in 2006 at the age of 52, making him Japan's youngest post-war prime minister. About a year later, the Liberal Democratic Party lost an Upper House election, and Abe resigned due to worsening health.

His condition improved over time. Abe then led the LDP to a landslide victory in the 2012 Lower House election and became prime minister once again.

He became known for his “Abenomics” policy aimed at revitalizing the country's economy. And he was a shrewd operator on the diplomatic front.

Abe led his party to a series of election victories and became Japan's longest-serving prime minister.

He stepped down again in 2020 due to health issues, but has remained an influential figure within the LDP.

Japan offered former Prime Minister Abe Shinzo an honor with a state funeral after he was killed in a shocking attack.

Dudhkosi Multipurpose Project



BY: DR. AB THAPA

The plan to implement the Dudh-Kosi storage dam hydropower project shelved for quite some time has again resurfaced. The NEA intends to implement this project exclusively for power generation in near future completely ignoring irrigation aspect. This decision would be a direct blow to our country's ambition to attain in near future self-sufficiency in food grains production.

Nepal Electricity Authority would be committing grave blunder if it implemented the Dudh-Kosi storage dam hydropower project sidelining the recommendations of the UNDP/FAO study. The proposed storage dam project would completely rule out the possibility to use the potential of the Dudh-Kosi river to irrigate our Eastern Terai lands to bring down our growing dependency on import of food grains.

Worst of all that it would virtually become meaningless to implement the highly attractive Sun-Kosi (Kurule) multipurpose project to divert the combined flow of both Sun-Kosi and Dudh-Kosi rivers to irrigate our almost entire lands in Eastern Terai extending from Parsa district to Kosi and also to generate abundant cheap electricity by implementing just one single diversion barrage project.

UNDP/FAO Study

The necessity of the irrigation development on a large scale in Nepal had been keenly felt since the middle of 1960s. Bearing in mind such necessity of large scale irrigation development, the experts of the Food and Agriculture Organization and the Government of Nepal had carried out feasibility study. The plan to divert the Sun-Kosi River into the Kamla River has been presented in a feasibility report. The final feasibility report was submitted in October, 1972.

The feasibility report makes it perfectly clear that the people in Nepal are mostly dependant for their food supply and livelihood on a narrow belt of cultivated land in Terai. The potential to add new land for cultivation is very limited in Nepal. Thus, there is a need to raise agricultural productivity by increasing cropping intensity. The Sun-Kosi diversion could help to provide sufficient water round the year to increase the cropping intensity as well as per hectare yield, as a result, the agricultural production could be substantially increased.

Dudh-Kosi Water out of Reach

Implementation of the Dudh-Kosi High Dam Power Project would result in outright killing the potential of the Sun-Kosi river for utilization of the entire flow of the this river (including Dudh-Kosi flow) for power generation and also irrigating the vast area of Eastern Terai by building just one single barrage across the Sun-Kosi at Kurule.

The entire regulated flow of the Dudh-Kosi discharged after power generation by the proposed Dudh-Kosi project hydropower station would be directly dropped into the Kosi with the result that the Dudh-Kosi river water would be completely out of reach for irrigation in our country's Eastern Terai

Unlike the UNDP/FAO proposed Sun-Kosi diversion multipurpose project (with barrage at Kurule), the proposed Dudh-Kosi High Dam project would be submerging vast area of hill valley, which would have serious environmental consequences for that region.

The Kurule Dam

The UNDP/FAO had provided Nepal technical and financial assistance to conduct the study of the Sun-Kosi dam project for the agricultural development in the Terai Plain. The UNDP/FAO study had identified Kurule, the confluence of Dudh-Kosi and the Sun-Kosi

as the best site for a barrage to divert the entire flow of the Sun-Kosi into Kamla for irrigation in our Eastern Terai

The Government of India had also investigated the Sun-Kosi dam site in 1940s. At that time India was exploring the possibility of building the Sun-Kosi dam primarily for controlling the Kosi River floods. The Indian survey team had favoured Kurule dam site on the Sun-Kosi River because it appeared geologically sound and allowed to have a big storage reservoir that extended in Dudh-Kosi and Sun-Kosi valleys. In all subsequent studies that followed thereafter the location for the dam at Kurule has remained unchanged.

The Master Plan study of the Kosi River water resources was made in 1985 by Japan Government Agency team. The Sun-Kosi River diversion for irrigating lands in the Eastern Terai had been identified as one of the top priority projects in the Master Plan study. That study too had adopted the Kurule as the appropriate location for the dam across the Sun-Kosi River to divert it into the Kamla River.

Watering down the 1966 Revised Kosi Treaty

The 1954 Kosi Treaty was signed between Nepal and India. Realizing the great significance of the entire Sun-Kosi water for irrigation in our Eastern Terai, Nepal wanted to make it absolutely sure that India recognizes our country's right to entire flow of the Sun-Kosi. As a result, the Kosi Treaty was revised in 1966. India's recognition of our country's right to entire waters of the Sun-Kosi has been explicitly expressed in the revised treaty. The Article 4 (i) of the Treaty related with the water rights has been presented hereinafter:

"HMG shall have every right to withdraw for irrigation and for any other purpose in Nepal water from the Kosi river and from the Sun-Kosi river or within the Kosi basin from any other tributaries of the Kosi river as may be required from time to time. The Union (it indicates India) shall have the right to regulate all the balance of supplies in the Kosi river at the barrage site thus available from time to time and to generate power in the Eastern Canal."

After the implementation of the Dudh-Kosi High Dam Power Project the entire Dudh-Kosi river water would be out of reach for irrigation in our Eastern Terai. Thus we ourselves would be denying our country the right to use the entire of the Sun-Kosi, which has been explicitly expressed in the Revised 1966 Kosi Treaty.

A Great National Loss

Most countries are invariably found to be at loggerhead with their neighbouring countries to protect their right to water of their rivers and prepared even to wage a war to defend such rights. Perfect examples of such confrontation in our region are the dispute between India and Pakistan over the Upper Bari Canal drawing water from the Jungipur Barrage built across the Sutlej River. Similarly, other such example is the dispute between India and Bangladesh over the withdrawal of a limited flow of the Ganges into the Bhagirathi.

Much to our chagrin, despite a long standing agreement between Nepal and India establishing our country's absolute right to entire flow of the Sun-Kosi river, perhaps ignorantly, we ourselves are now preparing to curtail substantially the dry season irrigation potential of the Sun-Kosi by bulding the Dudh-Kosi storage dam hydropower project which would be discharging the entire regulated flow almost directly into the Kosi. As a result, the regulated flow of the Dudh-Kosi would be completely out of reach for irrigation in Eastern Terai. Unfortunately, our economists, planners, intelligentsia and social and political institutions dedicated to Nepal's progress are as yet seemed to be completely indifferent at such a great national loss.

ELECTRIC COOKING

Accelerating Speed

As Nepal Oil Corporation has issued a harsh statement expressing its inability to continue the supply of petroleum products, including LPG, warning of a dire energy crisis, the future of Nepal's energy supply looks dark. At a time when there is no immediate sign for reduction of global oil price in the near future, all three tiers of governments in Nepal are in a rush to convert Nepal's current mode of energy from petrol to electricity and renewable energy. Will they catch the pace to reach all households before the country faces the actual shortage?

By KESHAB POUDEL

Minister for Energy, Water Resource and Irrigation Pampha Bhusal has an-

nounced that all Nepalese will receive dependable and quality electricity within two years. She said that the government is pushing for the total electrification of the country, implementing a clear strategy and plan to reduce the dependency on oil.

She said that the government is providing free electricity to the consumers consuming up to 20 units of electricity a month. Out of 5.1 million consumers, 2.6 million consumers are receiving the benefits under this scheme.

She said that the government has reduced up to 75 percent in tariff used for irrigation purposes. After providing the subsidy,

the per unit charge for the electricity use in irrigation costs Rs. 2. She also said that the government is reducing the tariff to encourage citizens to use electricity in cooking.

The minister also said that the government has removed the demand charge in irrigation and drinking water. She also said that the government has reduced 20 percent tariff in the last two years.

Minister Bhusal also said that the internal consumption of electricity has increased by 20 percent due to the implementation of the working procedure. Currently, per individual consumption of electricity is 330 units. She also said that between 700-1000 MW electricity will be added in the system from this year.

Current State

Minister Bhusal's statement and country's reality are different. Just a day after minister Bhusal said all this, NOC, on July 2, urged the government and citizens to prepare to face the worst energy crisis in the his-



tory of Nepal. NOC said that the supply of petroleum products and LPG will be completely stopped at any time because of lowering the stocks.

With the statement, the public is in panic and urban dwellers have started hoarding the petroleum products including LPG. As people need immediate solution, and minister asks for two years to match the demand and supply, how the government will manage the crisis is a big question.

Although the government has started to take the initiative for energy transition, shifting to electricity and renewable energy to minimize the import of petroleum products, it is like a race against time.

Depending on the bio-mass and renewable energy like bio-gas, rural populations are much safer in position with cooking energy. However, there will be a catastrophe in the life of overwhelming urban populations who have depended upon the LPG.

Although the electricity is available as an alternative for the urban population, the distribution system is old and undependable. Thus the quality of electricity supply is poor. In this scenario, the urban population may have to face a harsher



situation for cooking.

Campaign Against LPG

Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation Bhupal Bhusal has said that the government is conducting a campaign under the slogan 'Let Us Abandon Foreign LPG, Use Domestic Electricity' with the objective of gradually replacing the use of LPG with electric cooking stoves.

Presenting her policy document in the Upper House, Minister

Bhusal stressed that the energy, water resources and irrigation sectors have a special role to play in the country's overall development.

She informed the Upper House that works were being carried out with the goal of preparing a plan and implementing it to provide reliable and quality electricity services to all citizens within the next two years.

In this connection, Minister Bhusal mentioned that around 2.6 million customers of the about 5.2 million customers throughout the country were benefiting from the policy of providing free electricity to such customers consuming a maximum of 20 units of electricity in a month.

The tariff for electricity used in irrigation has been determined at two rupees per unit in line with the policy of providing up to 75 per cent concession in electricity for irrigation, she added.

The Minister for Energy further said that the household electricity tariff has been decreased for encouraging the use of electric ovens.

Likewise, she said the demand fees have been removed for drinking water and irrigation. Ac-



NATIONAL

According to her, the energy tariff to-

quality electrical services as per the

for the expansion of the distribution system in these provinces.



Minister Bhusal underscored that the budget has been allocated to prioritizing rural electrification and renewable energy development in the next fiscal year.

Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation Pampha Bhusal has said that the government is conducting a campaign under the slogan 'Let Us Abandon Foreign LPG, Use Domestic Electricity' with

ward drinking water has been reduced approximately by 50 per cent.

"The electricity tariff has been decreased by 20 per cent two times in the past two years when the prices of most of the goods and services are increasing," said Energy Minister Bhusal.

The Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation Minister informed that the 1,200 megawatts capacity Budhigandaki Hydroelectricity Project is to be moved ahead in the 'company model'.

Stating that it was necessary to construct reservoir-type projects in view of the energy security, she said works on distribution of compensation of land acquired for the reservoir-type project are almost completed. The Budhigandaki Project is near the load center.

She mentioned that special priority has been given to the construction of sub-station, transmission and distribution lines for providing

policy of using energy for a bright future using the electric equipment and expanding drinking water with the use of lifting, developing agriculture through irrigation and operation of transport and industrialization by using electricity.

Former minister Ganesh Shah holds the view that this is the right time to switch from petroleum products to clean energy. "Our foreign currency reserve has already dwindled so much and Nepal cannot afford for long," said Shah.

Full electrification in some provinces by next year

Minister Bhusal said that works are being carried out to have full electrification in Madhes, Bagmati, Gandaki and Lumbini provinces in the coming year itself.

She added that full electrification would be carried out in Province no 1, Karnali and Sudurpaschim provinces within the next two years by concluding a multi-year contract

the objective of gradually replacing the use of LPG with electric cooking stoves.

Energy Scenario

According to CBS, Firewood is used by 76.5% rural and 37.9% urban households. Use of LPG gas is the second most used cooking source in Nepal, 53.3% urban and 8.7% rural people are using LPG gas.

Despite numerous efforts by the government and other actors to speed this transition, energy data spanning the years 2000–18 reveal that 69% of households nationwide still rely on solid fuels for cooking. The proportion of solid-fuel users is especially high in rural regions, reaching 80%.

According to CBS2016, Firewood is used by 76.5% rural and 37.9% urban households.

Nepal Oil Corporation says demand for LPG has swelled to 50,000 tons monthly. Demand for LPG has grown despite Nepal earn-

ing the status of an energy-surplus country. The corporation says that currently 3.5 million cylinders are sold in the market monthly.

“As Nepal is heading towards a major energy crisis, the time is ripe to switch to clean and renewable energy. By using electric cooking, we can reduce the use of LPG drastically in urban areas,” said Mohan Das Manandhar, a policy expert and executive director of Niti Foundation, a local based non-profit organization.

Status Of Electricity

According to economic survey 2021/22, Nepal’s access to electricity has reached 94.0 percent including renewable energy. Nepal’s installed capacity of electricity has reached 2205 MW by April 2022, an increase of 30.9 percent compared to the same period of previous year. Total installed capacity of electricity was 1685 MW By July 15, 2021. Per person electricity consumption has reached 270 kilowatt hour.

Out of total generation connected to national grid, the contribution of private sector is 1440 MW and NEA 581 MW. In terms of contribution, 2022 MW is by hydropower, 49.76 MW by solar, 53.4 MW Thermal, 74 MW by Alternative Energy Promotion Center and 6 MW by Sugar Mill factories.

The household consumers of NEA have reached 5.2 million by March 14, 2022 except 580,000 Community Users. Electrification has reached 26 districts and it will reach 34 by July.

Some 6.9 percent of population has access to renewable energy sources. It was just 3.2 per-

cent by 2021 July. The government has installed 1733 units of bio-gas by March 2022. Similarly, 13455 improved stoves were also installed during this period.

By March 14 of 2022, access to electricity has reached 94 percent compared to 93 percent till July 14, 2021.

By March 13, 2022, 99.66 percent of population in Madhesh has access to electricity followed by province 1 with 96.95. Bagmati province covers 95.91, Gandaki 95.68, Lumbini 94.91. Karnali province has lowest number of people to have access to electricity, with just 43.87 per cent and Sudurpaschim has 71.07 percent.

With surplus electricity at hand and the availability of improved biogas technology within the country, promoting biogas, electricity and other renewable energy can reduce Nepal’s dependency on petroleum products and help Nepal to control foreign currency depletion.

“Nepal is now in quite comfortable position in terms of electric-

ity generation through hydropower. We have now surplus electricity and we can use it massively to convert our LPG based kitchen,” said Dr. Jagan Nath Shrestha, professor of Institute of Engineering.

Initiative By Federal, Provinces and Local Governments

Realizing the urgency, federal, provincial and local governments have already announced several new schemes to reduce the dependency on LPG and switch to electricity and renewable energy. However, it is a race against the time. NOC has already made it clear that the import and supply of petroleum products will stop at any day and at any time.

The federal cabinet has given permission to install 99000 smart meters and NEA has been installing them. Targeted to poor marginalized communities, NEA is providing Rs.3000 subsidy for persons to install meters.

Presenting a federal budget, the Minister for Finance has announced that the government has made arrangements to provide one



NATIONAL

cooking stove to each family through the local level.

The annual budget also said that those families who do not have access to electricity will be given smokeless stoves under smoke free kitchen campaign.

Similarly, all seven provincial governments have also toed their strategy with federal government on energy transition. Province 1 in its provincial policy and programs has announced to promote electric cooking stoves and electric vehicles to displace the petroleum projects and LPG.

The policy says electricity will be provided to all the citizens of province 1. For this, private and foreign investment will be attracted to

of renewable energy through public private partnership. The provincial government allocated the budget to provide subsidy to save health of poor and marginalized population replacing the use of cow dung in cooking by renewable energy.

Bagmati Provincial government also proposes to provide electricity to all through rural electrification, mini-grid, solar and other sources. Annual policies say it will work in collaboration with federal government and Nepal Electricity Authority under a slogan of Bagmati Province Total Light Province.

Gandaki Province has made clear announcements about the need to promote electric coking to replace LPG. The provincial government

the LPG. The government says this will be expanded to household levels later on. The province also plans to support the upgrading of transmission line and distributions systems to make electricity supply reliable and qualitative.

The province has also announced to provide electric stoves free of cost to the students pursuing Master's degree within the province. By the end of July, all the provincial ministries and departments will remove LPG from their canteens.

Karnali provincial government has also announced to encourage renewable energy like solar, bio-gas and wind to increase the access of clean energy in the province. As in the past, the government will provide incentives to the families to replace traditional energy and LPG. Annual budget of Karnali Province allocated funds to launch the campaign. Under this, bio-gas, micro-hydro, solar and wind power will be constructed.

In its annual program, Sudur Paschim Provincial Government has said that the province will displace the use of LPG encouraging electric cooking. The province also said that the electric vehicles will be promoted in the province.

The annual budget of Sudur Paschim Province has allocated the budget to install charging stations for electric vehicles. The budget said the private sector, particularly petrol pumps, are encouraged

to install charging stations in collaboration with NEA. Similarly, the province also announced to provide subsidy in electric stoves and electric vehicles.

Most of the local governments do have similar programs and plans to minimize the use of LPG and petroleum products. According to Purushottam Ghimire, a policy expert who has been closely monitoring



build hydropower projects of up to 20 MW.

As mentioned in the annual policies and program, the budget says electric cooking will be encouraged to displace the LPG. In close collaboration with Government, NGOs and private sector, charging stations will be built for the electric vehicles.

Madhesh Pradesh has announced policies for the promotion

says that electric stoves will be provided to displace LPG. The Government says that the province will provide incentives to private sector to produce electric stoves in the province.

In its annual policies and program, Lumbini Province government has announced that all provincial government offices will start to use electric cooking and displace



the policies, as per the programs and budget of federal, provinces and local governments, all the governments have shown the commitment and willingness to reduce the use of LPG and petroleum products. Ghimire holds the view that this is a silver lining of the ongoing crisis to change the mode of energy.

“We have already started a program to replace LPG by providing induction in some rural municipalities in southern Lalitpur district. Initially, we have distributed induction in subsidised rates in the entire households of Mahakal Rural Municipality in Lalitpur. This can be extended in other areas as well. However, we need to invest some money in the improvement of household wiring and rural distribution system,” said Dilli Ghimire, Executive Director, and Nepal Energy Foundation.

Karuna Bajracharya from Clean Energy Alliance said that they are ready to support concerned governments and work in collaborations with private sector and NGOs to promote electric cooking.

Open PPA For RoR Projects

Announcing to spend money to improve the quality of electric-

ity investing money in improving the transmission and distribution system, the government has also announced to increase the production of electricity.

Having waited for years to construct the hydropower projects, private investors heave a sigh of relief as the recent government decision aims to increase the limit (quota) of Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) of Run of the River Type Hydropower Project (ROR), reports Nepal Energy Forum online.

A meeting of the Council of Ministers has decided to maintain the 35 percent quota for 15,000 MW at 45 percent, said a source close to the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers.

NEA can sign PPA for additional 1,500 MW project along with this decision. With this decision, the quota for reservoir projects has been reduced and the quota for ROR has been increased.

Till now, 35 percent PPA quota has been fixed for reservoir projects. Now it will be reduced by 10 percent to 25 percent or 3750 MW. The quota for peaking is 30 percent or 4500 MW.

At present, 1,825 MW projects are under construction through PPA while 2,141 MW projects are

awaiting PPA through connection agreement. Similarly, 7200 MW projects with electricity connection are waiting for PPA by applying to NEA.

NOC WARNING

After unabated increase in the total loss, Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC) has written a letter calling the attention of prime minister and minister of industry commerce and supply.

NOC has warned that the supply of petroleum products will disrupt if the government does not provide necessary resources.

Executive Officer of NOC Umesh Prasad Thami urged the government either to allow it to raise the price of petroleum products or provide necessary money to it to maintain uninterrupted supply. Otherwise, there will be a crisis.

He also suggested working out a plan for the reduction of consumption of petroleum products. There is no alternative other than to reduce the consumption. NOC's loss will reach over Rs. 55 billion by the end of this fiscal year.

NOC said that it has due payments to make of over Rs. 30 billion to Indian Oil. Thami warned that the situation lands the government supplier in a grave situation in case the government fails to provide money.

FACE

NOC has suggested several ways to reduce the consumption of petroleum products. NOC proposes 5 liters petrol for motorbikes and 20 liters for the car.

After facing severe financial crisis, NOC in its written letter to the government has proposed a 10-point agenda. One of the suggestions is to reduce the supply of petroleum products to motorbike and private cars.

Spokesperson Binitmani Upadhyaya said that the board meeting approved its 10 points proposal to reduce the consumption.

Issuing quota of 5 liter for two wheelers and 20 liters for small car is one of the main suggestions.

Similarly, NOC also suggested stopping all vehicles movement in the city. It also suggested reviving the mandatory official holiday on Sunday. It also suggested total ban on import of diesel and petroleum vehicles. Operation of private cars and two wheelers in full capacity, introduction of odd

and even for all vehicles, restriction of vehicle in short distance and operation of goods carriers in full capacity.

NOC also suggests the government to take necessary steps to maximize the use of electricity in the household and electric cars.

He said that the consumption of petroleum products had drastically reduced during the two-day holidays last month. After removal of the holiday, it has started to increase again.

Conversion Of Petrol Vehicles To Electric

From cooking gas, the government is now working to table a bill to allow the conversion of petroleum vehicles to electricity powered vehicles. Ministry of Physical Infrastructures and Transport is drafting a law to allow this with an aim to convert 60 percent to electric by 2030.

Senior Divisional Engineer of the Ministry Shanker Dhama said that the drafting of the law on conversion of vehicle is in the last stage. He said that converting the old vehicles to electricity will be appropriate in many ways including to save foreign currency.

Conversion of vehicle

Policy Intervention

Although the federal government is backed by National Planning Commission, Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation and Ministry of Finance have been working to develop the guidelines, it is still uncertain when they will come out.

At a time when all provincial levels including many local governments have already announced to implement the programs and develop strategy to replace the LPG, publishing certain level of guidelines from the federal level would be meaningful.

“Federal government has

to announce some policy level guidelines to show its serious concern over the energy crisis. The reduction of LPG can be successful only working in collaboration between federal, provincial and local governments, NGOS and

private sector,” said Policy expert Manandhar.

Although there are rushes of different sectors to avoid a major energy crisis, it seems that the country is in a race against time. The government is also accelerating the speed of electric cooking. For the long term, there is a need to develop long term energy security policies and their implementations.

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27cm
10.6"
33.5cm
13"
6.5cm

is the only way to meet the target of making 60 percent vehicles electric. He said that the government is also promoting import of electric bus for the public transport.

“The current crisis has taught us a lesson about the importance of electric vehicles,” said Dhama. “Over 1000 small tempos are serving almost 200,000 people in the valley. Similarly, Sajha also launched electric vehicles in the valley.

Crazy English



BY: HEMANG DIXIT

Let me state straightaway that my thoughts are about the language and not the people! Years ago I read the book 'Crazy English' but the reality is that this language has become almost universal. It has diversified to bring about nineteen versions starting with English (Australia), Hinglish in India, Singlish in Singapore and ending with English (Zimbabwe).

Nepal's closeness to the British has been exemplified by referring to the Nepali in the British army as Johnny Gurkha. Nepalis in our army and that of British India fought in World Wars I & II. However now is the time to sing 'Auld Lang Syne' as Britain no longer rules the waves? Is the sun, which once never set in the Empire finally doing so?

Before BREXIT there was a comment stating that UK has to decide whether to stay in the European Union or become the 51st state of the US. Following BREXIT Premier Johnson edged up to the Americans and tried to take what remains of the Commonwealth along a new direction. Is India moving in that direction and taking Nepal along? Is the hullabaloo about Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) and the State Partnership Program (SPP) in which some of our leaders seem to have vested interests just a side show? Are we already there?

There is much stress in the learning of the English language but this a language full of contradictions which are bound to baffle the individual whose mother tongue it isn't. Some examples of very contradictory words used together are:

Found Missing	Open Secret
Small Crowd	Act Naturally
Clearly Misunderstood	Fully Empty
Pretty Ugly	Seriously Funny
Only Choice	Original Copies
Exact Estimates	Tragic Comedy
Foolish Wisdom	Liquid Gas
Working Holiday	Social Distancing & Naked Truth

One truth for us in Nepal now is that many of our leaders are naked too! Do we need to keep these at the helm any longer? Should they not be swept aside in one fell swoop?

Because of the fact that English was imposed on all lands that the British ruled over, it is no surprise that local words were absorbed into the language. As far as Nepal is concerned the words that come immediately to mind are – khukuri and dal-bhat.

But necessity is the mother of invention and though the UK is no longer in the European Union, English is still the official first language. This is a grave concern to the French who tried to replace it but without success. That is why we must ensure that our children can write and communicate in English with it ease if they are to get along in this modern world. But this does not mean that our toddlers have got to be suited and booted with a tie or 'kanthalagot' around their necks to ape what is present in colder regions. Such attire is unwarranted as it is a discomfort in the hot and humid regions of the tropics that we live in. One does not have to be dressed as an Englishman to speak their language! Reason for this is that it is a perennial source of income for schools insisting on

outdated concepts!

Credit must be given to the Englishman, who closeted in his castle, has come forward with the list of collective nouns given below:

Herd of cows, flock of chicken, school of fish, gaggle of geese, pride of lions, murder of crows, an exultation of doves and a congress of owls. Ba-

boons are specially privileged to have a parliament! Does this reflect on us in Nepal?

Our own language Gorkhali or Khaskura or Parbaitiya is said to have become common usage after Prithivi Narayan Shah in 1769 CE made himself master of the valley then known as Nepal. The language is said to have Sanskrit origin, though there is strong resemblance to the Kumauni language. The Bible, propagated by missionaries in Nepal has the distinction of being the first printed work in Nepali.

An interesting point is the current controversy of implementing the use of the new embossed vehicle plates with the Latin script. The rumour is that it is a scam to gradually do away with the use of Devnagiri script of the Nepali language! Does it seem possible?

Jung Bahadur, impressed by the British started the school for his children at Thapathali with an English teacher. He perhaps was not aware of the English heritage as stated in a rhyme of 1764 CE which went:

They hang the man and flog the woman,
That steals the goose from the common,
But let the greater villain loose,
That steals the common from the goose.

Yes, most of our current politicians have this trait too, as we have copied the Mother of All Parliaments of the UK. Surprisingly even the phrase 'Enough is enough' was heard in the parliaments of Nepal & UK in connection with resignations of a finance minister and a PM respectively!

Nepal has had a special relationship with the British since the Treaty of Sugauli (1816) was signed. Our citizens served initially in the Colonial British Indian army and later, following the independence of India in 1947 in both the British and Indian armies. In aftermath of this, many Nepalis have been trained under what was known as the Colombo Plan.

Countries never under British Rule i.e. Mozambique and Rwanda joined the Commonwealth of Nations in 1995 and 2009 respectively. The last conference of this organisation was held in Rwanda in June this year. Will taking membership of this Commonwealth be a safeguard for Nepal in future years? After all Ukraine's quest to become a member of the European Union is also for survival as is also the memberships of Finland and Sweden in NATO. In retrospect King Birendra's action to make Nepal a 'Zone of Peace' had the similar objective, which never came to fruition! Perhaps the time is ripe to re-start this process too.

The author is a retired medical doctor and writes fiction under the pen name of Mani Dixit also. Website: www.hdixit.org.np. Twitter: @manidixithd

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