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**OPINION**  
Dipak Gyawali



**FORUM**  
Sangya Dhakal



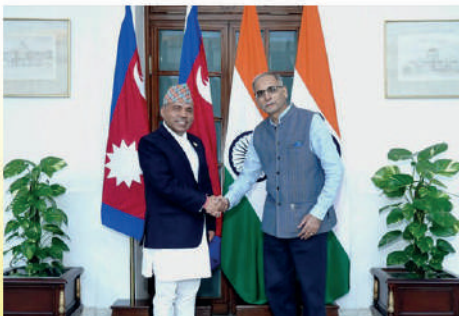
**ARTICLE**  
Hemang Dixit

# NEW SPOTLIGHT

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September - 27, 2022  
FORTNIGHTLY

## UPPER ARUN Power Of Four Digits

### INSIDE



**FOREIGN SECRETARY'S INDIA VISIT**  
STRENGTHENING RELATIONS



**EP DELEGATION**  
VISIT FOR CAUSE



**BEEN**  
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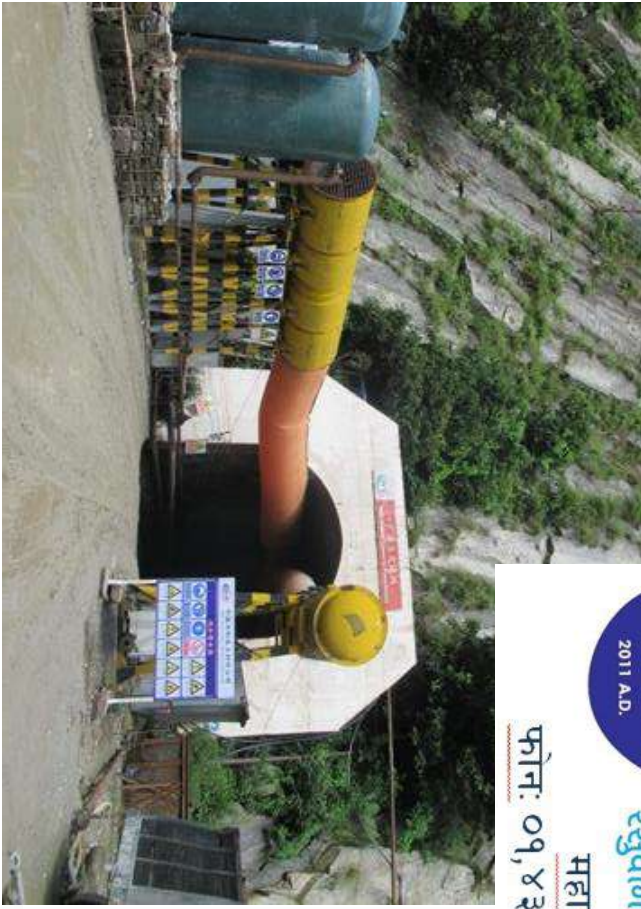
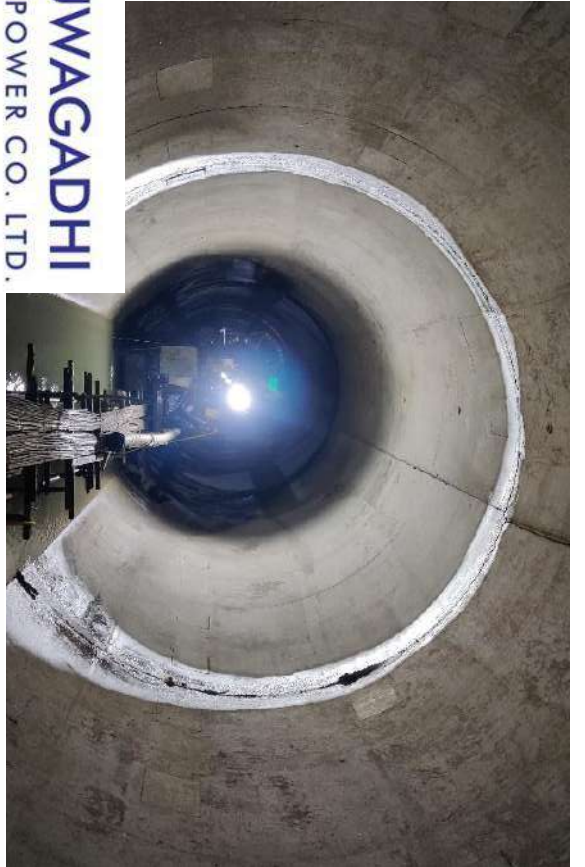
On the auspicious occasion of  
**BADA DASHAIN & SUBHA  
DIPAWALI - 2079**

I would like to express my  
heartfelt best wishes & greetings to  
all the students, parents, employees,  
teachers and wel-wishers for  
their peace and prosperity.

Dr. Tilak Rawal  
Chairman







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## Notes From The Editor



Although Nepal celebrated the seventh year of the seventh constitution with fanfare and commitment, there is nothing worth rejoicing for now. Nepal's Constitution is facing a major crisis with a trend violating it. The recent political events of Nepal have indicated that Nepal's constitutional and political process is not on the right track. Placing the incumbent chief justice under house arrest, the government made a major political blunder. The government defended its decision saying that it was necessary to prevent clashes in the court and provide safety to chief justice Cholendra Sumsher Rana. Similarly, the recent decision by president Bidhya Devi Bhandari not to give a seal to the citizenship amendment bill was another major constitutional blunder. Whether she likes it or not, the president does not have the right to reject the bill passed twice by both the houses of parliament. The operation of mayor of Kathmandu Metropolitan City Balen Shah continues. However, his move has deeply divided the society. Despite so many issues, we have decided to cover signing of an MoU for the construction of Upper Karnali as our cover story.

Two biggest national festivals Dashain and Tihar are knocking on the doors of the Nepali people. A rush of people going home from the capital city has already started. With elections just a month after the Tihar festival, political parties have a hectic time in selecting candidates for the elections. At a time when the prices of essential commodities have increased almost three folds in the last eight months after Russian invasion of Ukraine, common people in Nepal have had a very hard time in preparing to celebrate the festivals. In this hard time, people are going home to unite with their near and dear ones. New Spotlight family wishes all its customers, patrons and readers Happy Dashain 2079 BS.

**Keshab Poudel**

Editor



# CONTENT

## ARTICLE

Hemang Dixit 5

Newsnotes 6

BUSINESS BRIEF 8

## OPINION

Dipak Gyawali 12

## FOREIGN SECRETARY'S INDIA VISIT

Strengthening Relations 21

## EP DELEGATION

Visit For Cause 30

## BEEN

Energy Efficient Building 32

## FORUM

Sangya Dhakal 34



COVERSTORY: UPPER ARUN: Power Of Four Digits

25



POLITICS: Uncertain Course

14



CHINESE HIGH-LEVEL VISIT: Borders Open

16

# Political Thoughts



BY: HEMANG DIXIT

With our Federal and Pradesh elections on the horizon, it is but natural that political thoughts should come flooding into my mind. These came quickly and impromptu whilst my fingers had to work super fast to note them down on my laptop. I am at a quandary as to who to vote for as I gloss over the pros and cons over the actions of politicians in the past. My mind recollects *Franz Kafka's* words, 'One idiot is one idiot. Two idiots are two idiots. Ten thousand idiots are a political party.' Should we therefore vote for independent candidates this time round? What do my readers feel?

There are unlimited numbers of universal sayings about politics. *Robert Louis Stephenson's* was, 'Politics is perhaps the only profession for which no preparation is thought necessary.' How true as we look around. Being a politician is a special class for there are neither permanent friends nor foes in politics. Anything goes. Besides this, the experience of power is heady and absolute power corrupts absolutely. This is as *Lord Upton* says, 'Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.' No surprise then that a *Native American proverb* advises, 'Never follows a leader who is more in love with power than people.' To deal with them *Margaret Thatcher*, the first lady prime minister of UK advises, 'Both politicians and nappies need to be changed for the same reason.'

Going over the history of the England one learns that the country was a Republic under Oliver Cromwell from 1649 CE to 1660 CE, when monarchy was once again restored. One recalls to mind the words of *King Farouk of Egypt* who, when dethroned by Gen. Naguib remarked, 'There are only five kings in the world, four in the pack of cards and one King of England.' He was ignoring all the monarchies of Scandinavia and the Sheikdoms of the Middle East which presently amount to twenty? In this context it is worth remembering that it was England and later France, both of whom have the distinction of beheading a monarch each prior to becoming republics. The outpouring of love and respect for late Queen Elizabeth II shows the present situation.

Many years ago I read that the British Parliament with its long history of supremacy in the world was the 'Mother of Parliaments'. In fact an Englishman, Sir Ivor Jennings had helped to make our constitution for the establishment of Panchayat Raj. Our voting system was initially the 'First Past the Post' though it has now given way to the Proportional System criteria. At this point I remembered reading about a situation, some two hundred years ago, when a member of the British Parliament was asked about his loyalty vis-à-vis between his financier and the voters who elected him. His reply was that it was the financier. Besides, the British are supposed to be always for fair play and this brings to my mind an incident during one of the elections in UK when a house owner was asked about tenants living in his house eligible for voting. This man gave human names to the six cats

that he had as pets and sent the list to the authorities. The cats did not vote for the authorities found out and took the landlord to court!

Another story narrated by Abraham Lincoln during an election rally is classical. In those times in the US, only those who possessed land, house or something were allowed to vote. A poor Black American owned a donkey and as per the rule was allowed to vote. The next time however, the donkey had died and so the Black American was barred from voting. Lincoln asked who was voting, 'Was it the Black American or the donkey?'

We, in Nepal are at a stage when we no longer believe what our current leaders have been telling us. We are all waiting Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> when we can sweep the old order away and bring fresh blood to lead this country of ours. Will such an eventuality take place? Do we have the capability to make sweeping changes?

Referendum is a means of gauging national opinion on various serious issues and getting the people's feedback; to solve various issues has been increasing since 1970 CE. Referendum is defined by Wikipedia as a direct vote by the electorate on a proposal, law or political issue. The outcome may result in the adoption of a new policy or specific law or can be only advisory in some cases. . It is interesting to note that since this concept was put into practice in 1848, the Swiss have held 800 referendums on various issues. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, innumerable referendums have been held around the world. In Nepal, on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1980 a referendum was held during King Birendra's reign to decide on the future form of government. The option was to vote for the GoldenYellow i.e. Panchayat or Blue for full democracy. The Golden Yellow won. Such is life. Then over the years our politicians, even of different colours, have been stating that they will soon turn Nepal into a Switzerland or Singapore. Time has confirmed the adage 'Live in hope and die in despair'.

The bottom line in all this is the words of *Plato* who said centuries ago: 'The price good men pay for indifference to public affairs is to be ruled by evil men.' Though centuries have passed, the mentality amongst the people has been slow to change. Our practice always, as said by *Aesop* also centuries ago, is to 'Hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office'.

We in Nepal have been putting up with our old and tired leaders for too long. It is time for them to go for as *Abe Lincoln* said, 'You can fool some of the people all the time, and all the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time'. *Will Durant* however counters Lincoln by saying, 'It may be true that you can't fool all the people all the time, but you can fool enough of them to rule a large country!' A warning by Ed. Murrow, journalist goes, 'A nation of sheep will soon have a government of wolves'!

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

## NEWSNOTES

### Foreign Secretary Paudyal Address LDC's Annual Meetings

Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal addressed the annual Ministerial Meetings of the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) held separately on the margins of the 77th session of the UN General Assembly.



Speaking at the LLDCs Ministerial Meeting, Foreign Secretary Paudyal outlined the development challenges faced by LLDCs in the field of trade, transport and connectivity which were worsened by the pandemic, climate crisis and natural disasters. He highlighted the need of green and resilient recovery, expansion of physical and digital connectivity infrastructures, and strengthening of global cooperation for LLDCs.

He stressed on accelerating the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action. “Since Nepal is graduating from the LDC category by 2026, building strong connectivity through resilient infrastructure is our top priority. We expect a greater support from the transit countries and our development partners towards this end”, he emphasized. The Meeting concluded by adopting a Ministerial Declaration.

Addressing the LDCs Ministerial Meeting, Foreign Secretary Mr. Paudyal underlined the challenges such as inequality, climate emergency, and Covid pandemic faced by the Least Developed Countries. He added that even after the implementation of four decadal Programmes of Action for LDCs, these countries continue to grapple with underdevelopment and poverty and are aggravated further by the pandemic.

He called for building productive capacities, boosting investment and trade, reducing poverty, and strengthening institutions to solve these problems, as endorsed by the newly adopted Doha Programme of Action for the LDCs. He emphasized on ODA, technology transfer, aid for trade and climate finance to plug the resource gaps and develop capacity in the LDCs. He also called for strong support from partners to complement Nepal's national efforts to ensure its smooth, sustainable, and irreversible graduation. The Meeting adopted a Ministerial Declaration at its conclusion.

In the afternoon, Foreign Secretary Paudyal also attended a high-level luncheon to discuss the implementa-

tion of the Doha Programme of Action jointly organized by the State of Qatar, the host of the LDC5 Conference, Malawi, the Global Coordinator of the LDCs, and the UN-Office of the High Representative for the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDs (UN- OHRLLS).

On the sidelines today, Foreign Secretary Paudyal had bilateral meetings with Foreign Minister of Maldives Abdulla Sahid and Foreign Minister of Nicaragua, Denis Moncada Colindres. During the meeting, the two sides discussed various matters of mutual interest and cooperation at bilateral, regional, and multilateral levels.

### Nepal-RoK Ties Becoming Stronger: Ambassador Park

Ambassador of the Republic of Korea (RoK) Park Chong-suk has said that his country's relations with Nepal have been getting strengthened for years despite various challenges such as COVID-19.

“With strong bonds and spirit of collaboration be-

tween  
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tunity to strengthen solidarity,” said envoy Park while address a reception hosted to mark the RoK's National Day in the capital this evening.

Ambassador Park said that his government was actively supporting Nepal's response to the pandemic as it has provided PCR diagnostic kits, masks, and oxygen generators to support Nepal since the early stage.

“In this period, the Nepal-Korea Friendship Hospital, which was established with the support of the Korean government, was designated for COVID-19 patients. I would like to take this opportunity to express sincere appreciation to all the healthcare professionals in Nepal for their tireless efforts and dedication,” he said.

Talking about the growing popularity of the K-Pop culture as an integral part of Korean national identity, he said that the songs are widely loved. “And award-winning movies and TV series are becoming more accessible worldwide, including in Nepal.”

He further said that within two years of his stay in Nepal, he easily felt that modern and traditional cultures such as K-Pop, Korean TV Series and movies, and Taekwondo were gaining popularity among Nepali people. “Our



embassy successfully held a series of cultural events such as Korean Ambassador Open Taekwondo Championship, K-pop World Festival in Nepal, and Korean Film Festival,” he said. According to him, the Korean Embassy would continue making efforts to promote cultural exchanges between peoples of our two countries. He hoped that more Korean tourists would visit Nepal in the days ahead as both countries have opened their borders.

“The dispatch of KOICA volunteers has resumed this year. And the number of Nepali students going to Korea is also increasing from this year,” he said.

Speaking about the importance of Nepali migrant workers, he said that had been contributing not only to meeting the labour demand in Korea but also Nepal’s economic development. They are now becoming a cultural bridge between the two countries.

“Based on mutual trust, the two countries agreed to resume the dispatch of workers this year, and more than 12,000 Nepali workers are expected to enter Korea by the end of this year. This is the largest among the 16 countries that are involved in the Employment Permit System with Korea,” he said.

He said that the RoK is preparing to host the Busan World Expo 2030. Busan is the second largest city in Korea, located on the south-east on the Korean Peninsula. The world’s second largest transshipment hub is also a famous tourist spot for its heavenly beaches, fresh seafood and diverse cultural traits.

Vice President Nanda Bahadur Pun graced the ceremony as the chief guest. Politicians, Nepali and foreign diplomats and other dignitaries also attended the event.

## Two New Korea Overseas Volunteers Arrived In Nepal

Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) has dispatched two new Korea Overseas Volunteers (KOVs) to work in Nepal. They arrived in Kathmandu on September 21, 2022 and will dispatch to their concerned organizations on November 18, 2022 after completing the adaptation training program.

KOV Sungjin Choi will be dispatched in Thapathali Campus, Kathmandu and Jaehyoung Kim will be dispatched in Training Institute for Technical Instruction (TITI), Sanathimi Bhaktapur. Both of them are related to IT sector and

will be working as IT instructors in concerned offices.



The volunteers will take 2 months adaptation program in Nepal where they will learn about Nepalese society, culture, tradition as well as language. Such kind of adaptation program will be helpful for them to work in their concerned community/organization because from this program they learn how to adopt and work in new Nepalese environment.

The objective of KOV program is to focus more on transferring Korean knowledge and experiences directly in the grass root level. However, these programs aimed to improve the quality of life of people in partner countries to strengthen the friendship and mutual understanding between Korea and partner countries and to help in the efforts to achieve development goals set by the international community.

Since 1990 KOICA volunteers are deployed in various government organizations within and outside the Kathmandu valley according to the demand and request of Nepalese government in different sectors like education, health, agriculture, IT, tourism etc. Till date total 473 volunteers have been dispatched in Nepal. Currently, 5 KOICA volunteers are actively working in various governmental institutions inside Kathmandu Valley.

## Japan’s New Support For Agriculture And Urban Electricity Transmission Improving The Quality Of Life Of Nepali People

The Government of Japan has decided to extend grant assistance of up to two billion, two hundred and fifty-six million Japanese Yen (¥2,256,000,000), approximately NRs.2.0 billion, for the implementation of the Project for the Im-

provement of the Rehabilitation System in Eastern Terai Area, a concessional loan as-

sistance of up to the amount of fifteen billion, nine hundred and one million yen (¥15,901,000,000), approximately NRs.14.2 billion, for the Urban Transmission and Distribution System Improvement Project to the Government of Nepal.

The Embassy of Japan and the Ministry of Finance held a Signing Ceremony at the Ministry of Finance. KIKUTA Yutaka, Ambassador of Japan to Nepal, and Kr-



## NEWSNOTES

ishna Hari Pushkar, Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, signed notes related to the grant and loan assistance

On the occasion of the signing of the notes, Ambassador KIKUTA, mentioned that both agriculture and energy are the important sectors for economic development of Nepal. He stated that “agriculture is the major industry in which a large number of Nepali people are engaged. The development of agriculture is indispensable for the overall development of Nepal. Likewise, as Nepal’s hydropower generation capability has been improving, it is important to develop the transmission and distribution system to take full advantage of the progress.”

Ambassador KIKUTA further stated that “The year 2022 marks the 120th anniversary since the first eight Nepali students were dispatched to Japan for their studies. The two projects signed in this commemorative year symbolize the friendship between the two countries and will contribute to Nepal’s development.”

### Nepali Teachers Attend Course On Climate Change In Israel

Three Nepali professional Avigya Basnet, Director of Malpi Institute, Vani Rajeshwori Rana Shah, Principal of Uniglobe Secondary School and Netra Prasad Upadhyaya, Principal of Himali Boarding School attended course on



“Climate Change on Education Strategies for Primary and Secondary Schools” from 11-23 September 2022 in Israel.

They were attending the course under MASHAV (Israel’s Agency for International Development Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel) Scholarship.

### U.S. Ambassador Berry Pays Farewell Call On COAS General Sharma

U.S. Ambassador to Nepal Randy W Berry paid a farewell call on Chief of Army Staff (CoAS) General Prabhu Ram Sharma at Nepal Army Headquarter.

Ambassador Randy, who is returning home after completing his tenure in Nepal, discussed with CoAS Gen-



eral Sharma matter of bilateral relations and mutual interest.

CoAS General Sharma thanked ambassador Berry for his successful completion of tenure in Nepal and offered him greetings and wished happy future.

### Army Personnel Will Fulfill Their Constitutional Responsibilities: CoAS General Sharma

Chief of the Army Staff (CoAS) Prabhu Ram Sharma has completed a year in office. At an event organized in the Army headquarters to mark this occasion, the CoAS Sharma directed army personnel to be always prepared for the protection and promotion of the nation.

“Army personnel will fulfill their constitutional responsibilities excellently while analyzing and carrying out a micro study of present developing international, regional and national security,” he said.

The Army chief was addressing the program virtually. Talking about achievements the Army has made in the last one year, he said construction of the national pride Kathmandu- Madhes fast-track had speeded up.

He also presented Army’s goals, a course of action and priority areas for the coming time. The institution’s self-less service and professionalism, be it during crisis and natural disasters within the country, and during peacekeeping, have been praised at national and international levels, he asserted.

Nepali Army is major security agency of the country. So, the Army chief directed army personnel to fulfill their responsibility while maintaining military discipline, transparency and traits, and preserving its norms and values, said the Army spokesperson Narayan Silwal, quoting





CoAS Sharma.

He also directed them to show their professionalism during the November 20 House of Representatives and Province Assembly elections by providing security, and helping transport ballot boxes from rural and 'sensitive' areas, he added. (RSS)

### Peace Corps Celebrates 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary In Nepal

Peace Corps Celebrated The 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first group of volunteers in Kathmandu.

According to the U.S. Embassy Facebook Page, this month, the Peace Corps are celebrating the 60th anniversary of the first group of volunteers' arrival in Kathmandu in September 1962. Since then, thousands of Americans and Nepalis have worked together to create lasting change and achieve the Peace Corps mission - to promote world



peace and friendship. Congratulations Peace Corps on this historic anniversary!

"Happy Anniversary Peace Corps! 60 yrs ago, Nepali families & communities welcomed the first Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) where they formed lasting bonds. Wherever I go I hear stories of PCVs & the good they brought to their communities. Do you have a story to share?" tweets U.S. Ambassador to Nepal Randy Berry.

### Nepali Antiquity Returned To Nepal

The Consulate General of Nepal in New York and the Manhattan District Attorney's Office in New York jointly announced the recovery and repatriation of a Nepali antiquity to Nepal. Following the announcement, Acting Consul General Bishnu Gautam received the antiquity for Nepal from the Manhattan District Attorney Alvin L. Bragg, Jr. at a ceremony held at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office.

The antiquity, a stone image of goddess Durga, (13.25 x13.25 inches) which dates circa 14 th to 18 th century Kathmandu valley and lost around in 1960s, was illegally owned and put on auction in March 2022 by an auction house in New York with a written sale value of US\$

12,000-18,000. The Consulate General, Manhattan District Attorney's Office, the US Department of Homeland Security Investigations, and the Department of Archaeology of Nepal collaborated in its recovery.

Receiving the art object, Acting Consul General Gautam expressed deep gratitude to the District Attorney Bragg Jr. and the United States Department of Homeland Security Investigations in-Charge Ricky Patel and their outstanding teams for their steadfast commitment and incredible cooperation. He conveyed gratitude from the Government of Nepal for their enduring efforts. This outcome has contributed to Nepal's national efforts of recovery and reinstatement of her lost cultural properties.

While recalling a similar collaboration with the District Attorney's Office in 2021 when three stolen Nepali antiquities were recovered from New York and repatriated to Nepal, Gautam expressed deep appreciation for the commitment and cooperation of the US authorities in the recovery of stolen cultural properties of Nepal.

District Attorney Bragg, remarked, "A single piece stolen from any country is one too many. The historical, artistic, and cultural values attached to the Durga Stela are immeasurable, and I am pleased it is being returned to the people of Nepal." The Homeland Security Investigations New York Acting Special Agent in-Charge Ricky Patel remarked, "We feel proud to be a part of this grand repatriation where a piece of history will be returned to its rightful home so that its history can be shared with future Nepali generations."

The relentless efforts of Homeland Security Investigations and the Manhattan District Attorney's Office are vital to disrupting the illegal trafficking of antiquities and ensuring these priceless artifacts finds their way home."

The Consulate will arrange to send the art to Nepal in coordination with the Department of Archaeology, soon. Ganesh Adhikari from the Consulate General and senior officials from the Manhattan District Attorney Office and Department of



Homeland Security Investigations, including Acting Deputy Special Agent Mike Alfonso; Assistant District Attorney and Chief of Antiquities Trafficking Unit and the Senior Trial Counsel Col. Matthew Bogdanos; Assistant District Attorney Bradley Barbour; Supervising Investigative Analyst Apsara Iyear; and Investigative Analyst Daniel Healey, among others, were present on the occasion.

## BUSINESS BRIEF

### Federalism Foundation For Green, Inclusive Nepal: WB VP

World Bank Vice President for South Asia, Martin Raiser, has concluded his first visit to Nepal with a commitment to support the country's federalism and Green, Resilient, and Inclusive Development (GRID).



Raiser met with Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba and Finance Minister Janardan Sharma to discuss Nepal's economic recovery and growth priorities.

"Nepal has the opportunity to develop in a green, resilient, and inclusive manner and many of these development decisions need to be taken at the local level," said Martin Raiser. "The World Bank is committed to further supporting Nepal's federal system to empower provincial and local governments and bring services and job opportunities to the people."

The World Bank Group's Country Climate and Development Report for Nepal, launched by Raiser on September 15, 2022, examines the growing evidence of climate change impacts in Nepal and offers solutions to support low-carbon, resilient development. It identifies four transition areas that are fundamental to addressing climate risks and achieving broader development goals in Nepal: (i) integrated approaches to managing water, agriculture, and forests; (ii) harnessing the hydropower opportunity and energy transition; (iii) managing sustainable urbanization; and (iv) strengthening low-carbon resilient connectivity.

"I commend Nepal's commitment to focus on long-term green and inclusive growth and build resilience to climate and other shocks," said Raiser. "An important next step is to develop a detailed plan that will identify and prioritize specific actions, explore financing options given fiscal constraints, and support their implementation at all three levels of government."

### ADB VP Reaffirms Support For Nepal's Private Sector At Infra Summit

Asian Development Bank (ADB) Vice-President for Private Sector Operations and Public-Private Partnerships Ashok Lavasa was a keynote speaker at the Nepal Infrastructure Summit 2022 where he reaffirmed ADB's commitment to support Nepal's development agenda through private sector development.



"ADB is ready to support the Government of Nepal in attracting private sector investment by developing an enabling environment, mobilizing high-impact capital, introducing new technologies and innovations, and by building internal capacity," Lavasa said in remarks at the summit, which was at-

tended by former Prime Minister of Nepal Pushpa Kamal Dahal and representatives of development partners.

During his 5-day visit, Lavasa met Nepal Finance Minister and ADB Governor Janardan Sharma "Prabhakar" and commended the government on progress toward legal and regulatory reforms to attract private and foreign investment. He said ADB seeks to expand its support for Nepal in areas including public-private partnerships, infrastructure development, small and medium-sized enterprises, climate-smart agriculture, and digitalization, to spur environmentally sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

Lavasa also met Nepal Rastra Bank Governor Maha Prasad Adhikari, Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority Kulman Ghising, and Investment Board Nepal Chief Executive Officer Sushil Bhatta.

The vice-president also met with Federation of Contractors Association of Nepal President Rabi Singh, Federation of Women Entrepreneurs' Association of Nepal President Neeru Rayamajhi Khatri, Nepal Chamber of Commerce Senior Vice-President Kamlesh Kumar Agrawal, Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industries Vice-President Anjan Shrestha, Confederation of Nepalese Industries Vice-President Birendra Raj Pandey, Independent Power Producers' Association Vice-President Nepal Ganesh Karki, and other representatives from the private sector to discuss areas for collaboration and ADB support for the private sector.

ADB Country Director for Nepal Arnaud Cauchois joined Lavasa in these meetings.

ADB's cumulative assistance to Nepal since 1969 was \$7.3 billion as of 31 December 2021.

### FNCCI Senior VP Urges ADB To Invest More In Large Infrastructure

Senior Vice President of the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) Chandra Prasad Dhakal has asked the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to increase investment in large infrastructure projects promoted by the private sector.

Dhakal, who is also the chairman of the Global IME Bank, expressed this during a meeting with the Vice President of Asian Development Bank Ashok Lavasa in the capital.



The senior vice president of the FNCCI asked the ADB for investment in a large-scale infrastructure development project promoted by the private sector in collaboration with the Nepalese private sector, according to a press note issued by the Global IME Bank.

"Infrastructure plays an important role in the development of the country. The investment in the field of infrastructure not only helps in the development of the infrastructure but also contributes to the overall development of the country. There are ample opportunities for investment in large-scale infrastructure projects promoted by the private sector in Nepal. Due to the lack of resources, the private sector of Nepal has not been able to invest in large-scale tourism, hydroelectricity, hotels and other infrastructure projects. Asian Develop-



ment Bank should expand its investment in this area,” said Dhakal.

Dhakal said that Nepal’s banking sector is suffering from liquidity crunch and said that Asian Development Bank’s support is needed to resolve it, read the press note.

On that occasion, the vice president of Asian Development Bank Lavas said that Asian Development Bank is positive about this and is ready to invest in potential infrastructure projects in cooperation with the private sector of Nepal.

### French Parliamentarians Exchange Views With Dr. Khadka

The delegation of the France-Nepal Interparliamentary Friendship Group in the French Senate led by Daniel Salmon held a discussion with Foreign Minister Dr. Narayan Khadka.



They exchanged views on a range of matters including development cooperation, trade, and investment, climate change as well as the importance of parliamentary exchanges, according to the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs.

FM Dr. Khadka thanked the French side for the support provided during COVID-19.

In view of further strengthening Nepal-France relations, the President of the France-Nepal Inter-parliamentary Friendship Group in the French Senate, Senator Daniel Salmon, along with Senator Anne-Catherine Loisier, a member of the group, is on a 6-day official visit to Nepal from 5 to 10 September.

The French parliamentary group is in Nepal at the invitation of the Chairperson of Nepal France Interparliamentary Group, Madhav Kumar Nepal.

Apart from Madhav Kumar Nepal, the visiting French parliamentary delegation will pay courtesy calls on the President, the Prime Minister, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Chairperson of the National Assembly, KP Sharma Oli (former Prime Minister and leader of the main opposition), the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Mayor of Lalitpur, according to a press release of the French Embassy in Nepal.

### Birgunj Businesses Unhappy As India Imposes 20% Export Duty On Rice

Businesses in Birgunj have opposed the decision of India to impose 20 per cent export duty on paddy and rice since September 9.

India’s Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs issued a release informing that 20 per cent export duty was imposed on rice to secure domestic availability.

As per the release, the export duty will be imposed on rice in the husk (paddy or rough), husked (brown) rice, semi-milled or

wholly-milled rice, whether or not polished or glazed (other than parboiled rice and Basmati rice).

“Earlier,

there was zero export duty while importing paddy and rice from India. Now, there is a 20 per cent export duty. Moreover, the export of rice grits has been completely prohibited,” said Subodh Gupta, chairman of Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI), Birgunj.

Speaking at a press meet organized in FNCCI, Birgunj, regarding the export duty by India, Gupta said, “India’s paddy production was affected this year due to insufficient rain in West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh states, among others, following which the export duty has been imposed to ensure their domestic availability.”

The press meet was organized to call the attention of Indian authorities regarding the difficulties for Nepal. It also aimed to request the Nepal government to hold bilateral talks to solve the problem at the earliest.

India is the second largest producer of paddy and exporter of rice after China. “Nepal has been importing large quantities of paddy and rice from India over the years. Imposing export duty will affect us adversely,” said Gupta. Nepal imported paddy and rice worth nearly Rs. 48 billion during last fiscal year.

### Thulo.Com Starts Digital Transformation Of MSMEs In Province 1

Thulo.Com initiated a project “MSMEs Growth Bazar: Digitization of MSMEs by providing market access through Thulo.Com” which provides access to a digital platform, capacity building, brand promotion, and other IT solutions to Micro, Small, and Medium (MSMEs) enterprises based in four provinces - Province 1, Bagmati, Gandaki, and Lumbini.

Recently, Thulo.Com signed an MOU with the Federation of Nepal Cottage and Small Industries (FNCSI) - Province 1 for collaboration to facilitate the digital transformation of the MSMEs based in Province 1.

Thulo.Com has successfully conducted training in Morang, Sunsari, and Jhapa with overwhelming participation from MSMEs on the 11th, 12th, and 14th of September respectively. In total 211 participants benefited from the training and continued their association with Thulo.Com.

On the 11th of September, the training program was formally opened by Mrs. Shiva Upadhyaya Anju, President, FNCSI-Province 1 who acknowledged the need for digitization in this era and encouraged participants to take full advantage of the opportunity that Thulo.Com is providing through its project MSMEs Growth Bazar.

Lila Rijal, Vice President of FNCSI-Province 1 expressed her gratitude to Thulo.Com and the team for providing an opportunity for MSMEs to learn about the importance and benefits of digital transformation of their business along with providing access to an e-commerce platform for having an online shop to promote and sell their products online. She looks forward to carrying this collaboration further in order to provide this opportunity to more MSMEs in Province 1.



# Political Rise Of The Alternatives As Loktantra Decays



BY: DIPAK GYAWALI

In Nepal, Dussain marks the beginning of a new political calendar year. Folks return home from far and near, visit relatives and friends, take the blessings from their elders, and in between gastronomic orgies argue, yes, **POLITICS** in all caps! The discussions in every household and the shared opinion that emerges guide much of the political outlook for the following year; and woe unto a party or government that sends a bad message just before the ten-day holidays begin.

The kleptocratic coalition of Deuba-Prachanda-Madhav and etcetera – birthed by an extraordinary Supreme Court mandamus – has done just that by house-arresting the chief justice. An impeachment move was initiated against him by the coalition even as he was about deliver a judgement against Madhav and etcetera Baburam in a major corruption case. Given the fragmented nature of the parliament, there was little chance the impeachment would garner the required two-thirds majority. Hence the hearing was delayed until the penultimate moment before the ending of the parliament session, after which it could not even be put up for a vote. To prevent the chief justice from returning to the Supreme Court, he was placed under house arrest. This has prompted people to ask how a system that cannot even give justice to a chief justice can keep them safe and happy.

This is not the only scandal in a long litany of mal-governance, not just of this coalition government but of the previous ones as well. Through excessive party interference ever since the monarchy was sidelined, it has debased the civil service, the police, the judiciary as well the parliament itself and the neutral position of its speaker as well. Another latest is the insult heaped on the office of the president by throwing the president's 15-point questions on the citizenship bill into the dustbin. Indeed, it is not for nothing that people have started calling this 2005 Delhi Deal midwifed Loktantra a loot-tantra kakistocracy. This has given rise to a serious nation-wide soul-searching that is questioning what bonanza was promised and what anarchy was actually delivered by the big political parties ruling the roost during the last decade-and-a-half and their never-retiring leaders for the last three decades.

The public revulsion is widespread and a revolt is looming on the horizon. The local elections saw the unexpected rise of independent young mayors as well as a swathe of independent candidates who lost only by a small margin, a fact which indicates how much contempt the people have for the Kangress, EhMaLaise and the Noida

Maoists as well as their leaders. Its most important result has been to galvanize even more youths to step into the political arena. The coming general elections on 20<sup>th</sup> November, if it is held at all, will see a flood of independent and rebel candidates as well as new parties, many of them questioning the very basis of the current dispensation: secularism, federalism and republicanism. It is forcing the people not only to question the legitimacy of the current dispensation but to also re-think democracy and ask if good governance is not more important than the kind of “democracy” we have, especially when the latter has delivered nothing but wholesale corruption, scandals and mal-governance. This, and the total loss of any organizational and moral control over their cadres, is what is scaring the daylights out of Nepal's old, multiple times failed leaders.

Jumping into the fray to drain this swamp – and just in time with a great Dussain gift to the politically oriented – is former BBC journalist and former chief of Sajha-Bibeksheel party Rabindra Mishra with his book outlining his political manifesto *Bichar Bhandha Mathi Desh* (“Country above Ideology”). Written in a fluent and argumentative style, this book not only exposes the weak foundations of Loktantra and the fraudulent behaviour of its captains but also outlines his view of the political course corrections necessary to save the country from impending disaster. Coming at a time when political parties are preparing their election manifestos, which in the past have been a recital of cheap promises never kept and a meaningless ritual, this book sets the bar high and will force parties to be more explicit about their politics and the policies they would pursue. (Lest we forget, Deuba's Kangress held its 14<sup>th</sup> general convention in December 2021 but failed to address ANY policy issues! It promised to do so with a special “policy convention” in six months but again has failed to.)

More importantly it will force Mishra's (so far) own party Sajha-Bibeksheel as well as new ones like Rabi Lamichhane's Swatantra to prove that they are not just new, cheap clones of Maoist ideology-carrying and BP, Krishna Prasad Bhattarai politics-rejecting Nepali Kangress. To argue that they carry the same 12-Point Delhi Deal Maoist-appeasing politics but are young and new will hardly be sufficient to sway voters frustrated with the current dispensation. The same questioning – what is your real politics and how is it different from that of the failed parties – will also apply to the wave of independent candidates. They better go through Mishra's manifesto book to prepare their



convincing countervailing answers, if any!

Mishra argues openly, after what he says was much soul-searching and reflections, for getting rid of what life-long democrat PM Krishna Prasad Bhattarai called “imported concepts unsuited to Nepali ethos” of secularism, federalism and republicanism that have given the country only instability and mal-governance. He instead argues for reclaiming the country’s Hindu-Buddhist identity, bringing about effective decentralization and restoring constitutional monarchy. It is his latter stand on monarchy that distinguishes this book from Mishra’s earlier position before the local elections presented to his party for discussion while he was still its chair.

He also argues eloquently for a welfare state – and by default the need rescue socialism from our fake socialists in power – that appeals immensely to me as a self-styled Green Democratic Socialist.

I must here clarify some Nepali terms that have distorted the debate with great harm to Nepali welfare and environmental policy. Like Mishra I am not a *rajabadi* (royalist): I am a Dipak-badi and you reading this are a You-badi as you must be! I am also not a *rajtantra-badi* (for royal rule) but a *prajatantra-badi* (democrat for people’s rule). And as a democrat, I argue for *rajsanstha* (institution of constitutional monarchy) as an above the party referee, upholding values that need to be kept out of politicization and electoral competition.

The current brouhaha over Queen Elizabeth’s passing away with its surfeit coverage in the Western media has also forced Nepalis to rethink republicanism. The current British Westminster model, which the Maoists revolted against claiming it was a butcher’s shop displaying goat’s head and selling dog’s meat (and to which they returned in 2006, presumably to indecently benefit personally from selling dog’s meat to a gullible Nepali public!), is something India as erstwhile Raj colony copied and which Nepal unquestioningly imported. Britain, as columnist Badrinarsingh KC writing in the *Nagarik*, is neither secular, nor federal nor a republic, its King swears to uphold the teachings of the Anglican Church, and its prime minister and all parliamentarians swear loyalty to the King and God of the Church!

That such long-term traditions are essential to uphold not only this kind of a Westminster dispensation but

any nation with its own tradition and historical values has come as a shock to many, including the more honest among our revolutionary lefties. And they are also shocked by the hypocrisy of the British and its ambassador Andrew Sparks who in a clear breach of diplomatic protocol (Mishra describes this and more in his book) advocated publicly for Nepal giving up its Hindu identity and going secular. They might also remember how equally hypocritically the

Catholic Pope of Rome was when he berated the UK for secular tendencies even while congratulating Nepal for doing the same! Longitudinal surveys conducted by Interdisciplinary Analysts for a decade from 2004 showed a consistent 60% support for Nepal retaining its Hindu identity, a support that increased in the latter years to 74%! It, and other survey findings regarding monarchy and federalism as well, are described in a chapter



of mine in a book *Nepal-India Relations* edited by our former ambassador to Israel Dr. Anjan Shakya.

Honest seekers of truth would be helped immensely in their soul-searching if they read, in addition to Mishra’s book, the research conducted by university of Pennsylvania professor Mauro Guillen in 137 countries between 1900 and 2010 which shows that constitutional monarchies outperformed republics in economic development. This is because – says the professor from a state that held the US’s first two Constitution Convention that declared US a republic independent from the British – monarchies better protect property rights, are more open to international trade, and reduce self-serving executive discretion by imposing long-term views on politicians.

All this is not to agree with Mishra a hundred percent. His assertion that countries don’t have *dharma* goes against all our Eastern traditions that maintain they do – they have to uphold *raj dharma*, without which governments degenerate into kleptocracy as currently. His assessments of King Mahendra, and especially King Gyanendra are still imbued with the very *bikrit baambad* (vulgar Marxism) he critiques. And he also does not see the value, in the path ahead, of restoring the 1990 order as the least violent of options. But that for further democratic debates with him in the days ahead!

## POLITICS

# Uncertain Course

*The recent three political trends indicate that Nepal's politics is heading to the uncertain course*

By A CORRESPONDENT

With a decision not to sign Citizenship Amendment Bill, President Bidhya Devi Bhandari gave a clear signal that she cannot be compelled to sign any bills that she considers against her wish.

Although the Constitution of Nepal has made the president a ceremonial head of the state with very little role and all the power vested on the elected prime minister and parliament, the president justified her decision by arguing

mandu Metropolitan City (KMC) Balen Shah is now creating havoc among the common people.

Although all three recent incidents do violate the provisions of the constitution, it is really matters in populist politics. With a backing of a group that consid-

ers the new citizen act is against Nepal is strongly backing President Bhandari.

Similarly, the operation destruction campaign of mayor Balen, in many cases, violates the right to property guaranteed by the constitution. The announcement of lawyers, who were

supposed to defend the freedom of individuals, to bar Cholendra from entering the court and the Deuba-led coalition government's decision to place Rana in undeclared House Arrest is too unjustifiable in terms of con-

stitutional and legal.

The decision of Mayor Balen to dismantle the houses built illegally and encroaching the public land is hailed in Kathmandu and there is a big young group behind him. However, hitting each and every house that his team considers illegal creates panic among the public.

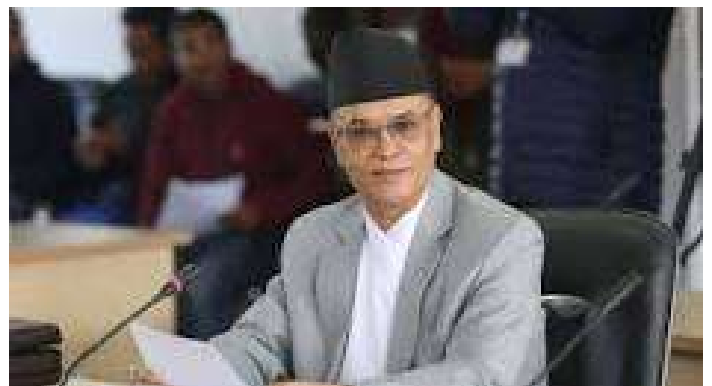
At a time when the judiciary is facing a major blow to its credibility after the stamen delivered by suspended chief justice Rana before the impeachment



that she is a guardian of the constitution and not just a rubber stamp.

With a decision of the government, Suspended chief justice Cholendra Sumsher Rana, who faced the failed impeachment in the House of Representatives, is now under an undeclared house arrest.

A campaign operation destroys illegal construction and vacates the public land launched by the newly elected Mayor of Kath-





committee, there is no institution to protect the rights of individuals even if a person like Mayor Balen Shah moves his dozer to any houses.

In the last 30 years of urbanization in Nepal, people in power and close to power circles and common people have rampantly violated the laws by constructing houses and encroaching the public land on the river banks of Kathmandu. However, all the constructions are not illegal.

The decision of President Bhandari not to sign the Citizenship Amendment Bill has made almost 500,000 offspring of Nepali citizens stateless. Contradictory to the populist slogan of Kathmandu, most of those are from the hills.

In its seven decades of

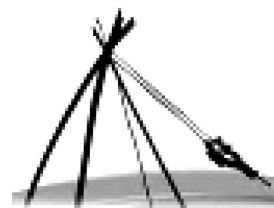
modernization, Nepal has seen a lot of constitutional upheavals and breach of the constitution is always taken as normal practice in Nepal where the system and regimes have been changed harping on the populist agenda by populist groups.

As Nepal has just celebrated its seventh constitution day with fanfare, the above three incidents indicated that Nepal is in the process of derailment of the new constitution.

At a time when the country is fac-



ing the new elections on November 23, the actions of President Bhandari, Balen and Cholendra push the country into a new crisis with uncertainty over the holding of the elections.



## Heartly Greetings On Occasion Of Vijaya Dashami & Shubh Deepawali -2079



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## CHINESE HIGH-LEVEL VISIT

# Borders Open

*Just hours after the return of a high level Chinese delegation, China opens Tatopani and Rasuwa checkpoints for Nepal's imports*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Just a few hours after the return of Chairperson of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China, Li Zhanshu completing four day visit, Tatopani and Rasuwa border checkpoints opened right away. Both checkpoints were closed for more than one month, citing increasing cases of COVID-19.

According to Rastriya Samachar Samiti (RSS), it is said that the borders have been resumed after bilateral talks in course of a four-day Nepal visit of the Chairperson of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China, Li Zhanshu.

Earlier, 14 big containers used to enter Nepal via the Rasuwa checkpoint daily. Nepal had during the visit of Chairperson Li raised voices to ensure the resumption of the border points at the earliest.

During the courtesy call on Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, Chairperson Li had assured of facilitating the containers carrying daily essentials and goods for coming festivals.

At the invitation of Speaker of the House of Representatives of Nepal Agni Prasad Sapkota, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China, Li Zhanshu was scheduled to visit Nepal from 12 to 15 September 2022.

Agni Prasad Sapkota and Li Zhanshu held delegation-level bilateral talks on 12 September 2022.

During his stay in Nepal, Li Zhanshu paid courtesy calls on President Bidya Devi Bhandari on 14 September 2022, and Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba on 13 September 2022.

Li Zhanshu also met with

Chairperson of the National Assembly Ganesh Prasad Timilsina, and Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. Narayan Khadka paid a courtesy call on Li Zhanshu.

K P Sharma Oli, former Prime Minister and Chairman of CPN-UML, and Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', former Prime Minister and Chairman of CPN-Maoist Centre were also to hold separate meetings with the visiting Chairman of the Standing Committee of



the National People's Congress of China Li Zhanshu on 13 September 2022.

The Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China Li Zhanshu, who was on an official visit to Nepal, paid a courtesy call on President Bidya Devi Bhandari at the President Office in Shital Niwas. While recalling the high-level visits from both sides, various matters of mutual interests were discussed on the occasion.

Li Zhanshu, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China called on Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba at Singha Durbar.

During the meeting, the two dignitaries discussed wide-ranging matters of mutual interest between the two countries including bilateral trade, in-

vestment, connectivity, return of Nepali students to China, resumption of passenger flights, and reopening of border ports, among others. The Chinese side appreciated Nepal for its stand on One China policy and its commitment not to allow the Nepali territory to be used against the core interests of China.

Prime Minister Deuba appreciated China for its continued support to Nepal's development endeavors over the years. On the occasion, chairman Li assured the Prime Minister that China will reopen the border ports shortly after controlling Covid-19 cases in Tibet while facilitating the passage of containers carrying goods and supplies for upcoming festivities in Nepal.

The Chinese delegation informed that it will step up efforts to implement Chinese-assisted projects in Nepal. In response to Nepal's request, the Chinese side agreed to take proactive efforts to support Nepal's smooth and sustainable graduation from the LDC status.

Earlier, Chairman Li Zhanshu held a meeting with Ganesh Prasad Timilsina, Chairperson of the National Assembly of the Federal Parliament of Nepal. Various matters of Nepal-China relations including the inter-parliamentary exchanges and cooperation were discussed on the occasion.

Dr. Narayan Khadka, Minister for Foreign Affairs also paid a courtesy call on chairman. Li Zhanshu. During the call on, the two sides exchanged views on various aspects of Nepal-China relations.

The visit of highest political level meeting from China and opening of the border which was shut down or almost two years made a full of message.





**Heartly Greetings  
On Occasion Of  
Vijaya Dashami  
& Shubh Deepawali -2079**



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### Upper Trishuli 3B Hydroelectric Project (37MW)

#### SALIENT FEATURES OF UPPER TRISHULI 3B HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT



##### Hydrology

Catchment Area: - 4577 km<sup>2</sup>

Design Discharge (at 70 % PoP): - 51 m<sup>3</sup>/sec

**Head Pond Connected to UT3A Tailrace Pond**

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

Lowest Bed Level: - 714.20 m

Intake: - Bell Mouth Type

**Approach Pressure Conduit**

Type: - Box Culvert

Length: - 243.47 m + 40 m

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

**Headrace Tunnel**

Shape: - Horseshoe

Length: - 3805.48 m

Diameter: - 5.1 m ~ 6.1 m

**Add Tunnel**

Shape: - Inverted D

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

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

**Surge Tank**

Type: - Restricted Orifice

Diameter: - 15.0 m

Height: - 39.3 m

##### Penstock

Length: - 185.33m

Diameter: - 4.2

Thickness: - 18mm

**Powerhouse**

Type: - Surface

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

Type: - RCC

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

**Turbine**

Type: - Vertical Axis Francis

Capacity: - 2 X 19.715 MW

**Generator**

Type: - 3 Phase Synchronous

Capacity: - 2 X 22.7047 MVA

**Transformer**

Type: - 3 Phase Oil Immersed Outdoor ONAN

Capacity: - 2 X 23 MVA

Voltage: - 11kV /132kV

**Transmission Line**

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



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**DUCTYL500D**

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बाणिश्यो त्याति**

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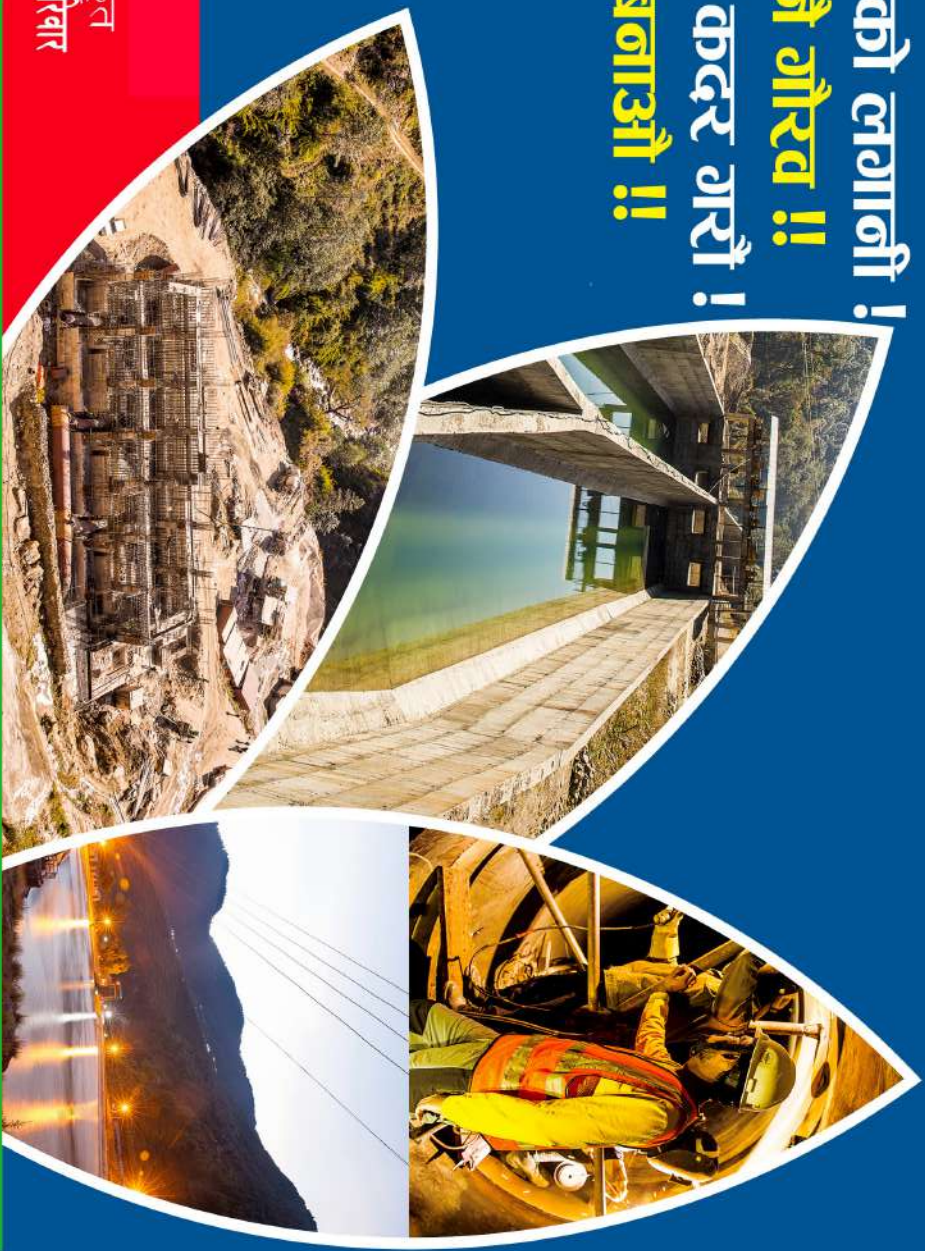
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## FOREIGN SECRETARY'S INDIA VISIT

# Strengthening Relations

*Nepal and India discuss wide range of issues during the secretary level meeting*

By A CORRESPONDENT

With professional skills learned in his long career in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal, who always prefers to work in low profile with beneficial results for Nepal, has quietly handled his recent secretary level meeting in India.

As Dr. Shanker Prasad Sharma, a well read technocrat turned diplomat as ambassador of Nepal to India, and professional teams of Ministry of Foreign Affairs were in his side, foreign secretary Paudyal quietly presented Nepal's case with his Indian counterpart.

Backed by Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba and foreign minister Dr. Narayan Khadka, who completed his PhD in Nepal-India relations, foreign secretary Paudyal put Nepal's agenda in the meeting.

He paid an official visit to India from 13-14 September 2022 at the invitation of the Foreign Secretary of India Vinay Mohan Kwatra.

Foreign Secretary Paudyal and his counterpart Vinay Kwatra held a bilateral meeting in New Delhi. The Foreign Secretaries reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral cooperation between India and Nepal, including economic and commercial cooperation, enhancing connectivity, development cooperation, trade, culture, and people-people relations.

They noted the progress on many projects and initiatives announced during the recent visits of Nepal Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba to India in April this year and Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Nepal in May. Both Foreign Secretaries appreciated the recent progress in bilateral cooperation in power sector including through export of power from Nepal to India.

They agreed that both sides will work to further strengthen such cooperation in keeping with the Joint Vision Statement on Power Sector Cooperation. Both sides welcomed recent signing of the MoUs between NHPC, In-

dia and IBN, Nepal on the development of West Seti and SR-6 projects.

The progress made in operationalization of Kurta-Bijalpura segment of Jayanagar-Bardibas rail link and Bathnaha-Nepal Custom Yard segment of Jogbani-Biratnagar rail link, was noted with satisfaction. The Nepali side appreciated the Covid assistance provided by India during the pandemic and also thanked the Indian side for keeping the supply lines of trade open, even during

of the high-level visits to each other's country by the Prime Ministers of Nepal and India figured during the call on.

Foreign Secretary Paudyal visited the Embassy of Nepal, New Delhi and interacted with Ambassador Sharma and Embassy officials. Ambassador Dr. Sharma hosted dinner in honor of visiting Foreign Secretary and his delegation.

Nepalese Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal met External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and apprised him



the peak of the lockdown.

Both sides agreed to expeditiously progress on project proposals for the Ramayana Circuit. They also agreed to expeditiously implement extension of petroleum pipeline from Amlekhgunj to Chitwan and construction of an LPG pipeline from Motihari to Chitwan. The Nepal Foreign Secretary was in New Delhi on a two day visit to India.

Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal called on External Affairs Minister of India Dr. S. Jaishankar at the Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi.

According to a press release issued by Embassy of Nepal in India, matters of bilateral relations and cooperation, including the progress achieved in the implementation of the outcome

of his talks with his Indian counterpart, Vinay Kwatra.

"Pleased to receive Nepal's Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal. Glad to learn from him that his discussions in India have been productive," Jaishankar said in a tweet.

The meeting also discussed a review of the Treaty of Trade and Transit and the construction of a liquefied petroleum gas pipeline from Motihari, India to Chitwan among others.

However, statements issued by the Nepali Embassy and Ministry of External Affairs, India do not mention the hotly-debated issue of the resumption of recruitment of Nepali youths in the Indian Army.

# Transforming SFDP And Building Strong Grassroots Level Institution For Poverty Alleviation



DR. SHIVRAM PRASAD KOIRALA  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



DR. NAV RAJ SIMKHADA,  
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**SANA KISAN BIKAS LAGHUBITTA BITTIYASANSTHA LTD (SKBBL)**

Small Farmers Development Program (SFDP) was initiated in 2032 (1975 AD) to address acute and widespread poverty in the country. The SFDB adopted holistic approach to alleviate poverty. The program was piloted in Mahendranagar of Dhanusha and Tupche of Nuwakot, covering both Plain and Hill of the country.

SFDP was the first group-based and credit plus development initiative dedicated to work for the transformation of poor and under privileged people who are left behind from the mainstream of development. The program offered micro credit for income-generating activities along with a saving program. The program also provided non-financial services such as skill development trainings, health, awareness, and small infrastructure improvement activities to help promote wellbeing of small farmers.

The program was initially implemented by Agriculture Development Bank Ltd (ADBL). SFDP service has reached to 2 lakhs 10 thousand farmer families of 652 then village panchayat (Local Municipalities) of 75 districts. Until by the fiscal year 2048/049 (1991/1992 AD). The quality of loan provided under SFDP started deteriorating, due to rapid expansion and lack of supervision of the program. Responding to this challenge, ADBL introduced Institutional Development Program (IDP) in 1987 to transfer SFDP into member owned and managed Small Farmer Agriculture Cooperative Ltd (SFACLs) with the financial and technical support from GTZ.

Two hundred twenty-eight SFACLs were formed by under IDP. The transformation of program into autonomous and member-owned financial institutions has helped to improve the loan quality, reduce the cost and thereby enhancing the sustainability of the program.

Need of a dedicated institution was felt to provide continuous financial and non-financial services to SFACLs together with supervising and building their institutional capacities. Therefore, Sana Kisan Bikas Laghubitta Bittiyasanstha Ltd (SKBBL)-in English Small Farmer Development Microfinance Financial Institution was established in 2001 to provide continuous services to SFACLs.

In order to provide accessible services to unserved and under-served communities, SKBBL has adopted Farmers to Farmer replication approach wherein sustainable and well managed SFACLs are given opportunity to replicate new SFACLs in neighboring villages. As of now total one thousand three hundred and nine partner cooperatives have been formed through this process and additional 155 cooperatives are in the process of replication.

The loan portfolio of SFACLs has grown from 2 billion to 85 billion from 2001 to 2022. Out of the total loan mobilized by partner cooperatives, only 35 percent i.e., NPR 30 billion has been provided by SKBBL and the rest 65 percent has been mobilized by the

partner cooperatives locally as a members' share and savings.





Of total Share capital of SKBBL, 44% is owned by 231 Small farmers cooperative, 22 % by Agricultural Development Bank Limited (ADBL), 1% by Nepal bank Limited, 3% by Nabil Bank Limited and 30% by the Public.

SKBBL provides wholesale credit to its partner cooperatives and the cooperatives in turn provide retail credit to its member farmers. SKBBL is providing its services through its 11 area offices covering 542 Municipalities and 77 districts (except Humla), out of total 753 Municipalities and 77 districts of the country.

As of July 2022, SKBBL is providing its services to one million households through its network of one thousand three hundred and nine small farmer cooperatives. The beneficiaries of SKBBL include 79 % women, 11% Dalit, and 38 % indigenous and ethnic minorities.

With the support and collaboration of Nepal Government and different donor agencies, SKBBL has been operating projects related to agriculture and livestock enterprises, skill, and enterprise development,

## Supports and Collaborations

Ministry of Finance, Government of Nepal

Asian Development Bank

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

Department for international Development (DFID), UK-AID

United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)

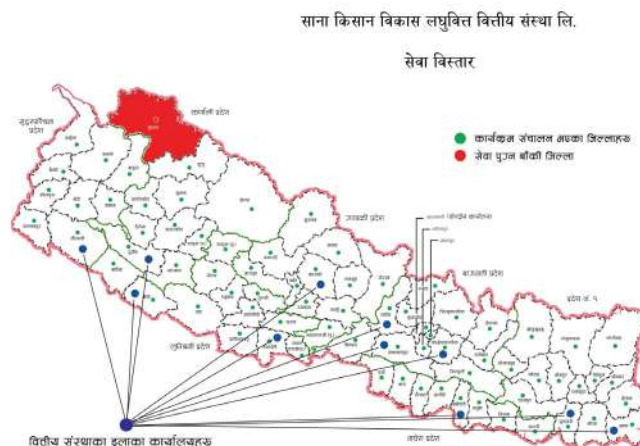
German Technical Cooperation (GIZ)

SKBBL is implementing the “Learn and Earn Program” in collaboration with the Embassy of Israel and the government of Nepal. Three thousand one hundred and sixty-two youth from small farmers family are directly benefited from it. They have returned Nepal after the completion of 11 months training program on Modern agriculture and Animal husbandry practices.

The returnee trainees are now engaged in commercial farming and livestock rearing in different municipalities. It is showcasing how the adaptation of knowledge and technology in farming help enhance agriculture production and productivity.

Currently the youth involvement in Agriculture and Animal husbandry has significantly increased through demo effect.

As per the study of an independent agency con-



ducted in the year 2020, the livestock credit provided through SKBBL has helped increase the meat and milk production by 5 times and the annual income of livestock rearing farmers by 11 times.

At present the cooperatives, with the support of SKBBL, are working in various areas including cooperative farming, Forest and environment protection, infrastructure development, milk collection

center, cold storage operations, food processing, agriculture and livestock promotion activities, skills and capacity development, technical support, and supplies of agriculture inputs such as fertilizer, seeds, equipment's, and pesticides.

SFACL is a unique three-tiered organizational structure, which ensures the involvement of women and disadvantaged members in decision making process. The SFACL forms the groups comprising 5-12 members of small farmers, poor, and people from deprived communities at the neighborhood. This has been one of the exemplary and successful models for poverty reduction and empowerment of rural communities in Nepal.

Recognizing the positive impact of this model, The Consultative Group to Assist the poor (CGAP)/World Bank has awarded SKBBL with Pro-Poor innovation Challenge (PPIC) award of USD 50,000 in 2003.

Likewise, it was honored with the “Best Managed Microfinance Development Bank” Award. In 2014.

In addition, Rural Enterprise Financing Project implemented by SKBBL has been awarded by Ministry of Finance and Asian Development Bank for exemplary work in 2020 during COVID Pandemic.

SKBBL has been implementing various activities related to agro enterprise development as well as strengthening different agriculture value chain activities including production, processing, storage and marketing. It aims to expand its services to all the 77 districts of Nepal within 5 years, increase the loan portfolio from 30 billion to 60 billion, transform the traditional farming system to modern and technology-based farming. Additionally, it has also focused to carryout various activities for the involvement of women, youth, and deprived communities in different development endeavor.

SKBBL has envisioned to be established as a national level specialized bank dedicated to rural and agriculture transformation.

## चाडवाडको समयमा खानपानमा ध्यान दिऔं।

- मासु तथा मासुजन्य पदार्थको आवश्यकताभन्दा बढी उपभोग नगरौं,
- काटेको वा पकाएको मासु तथा मासुजन्य पदार्थ सुरक्षित राखेर मात्र उपभोग गरौं,
- सडेगलेको र गन्हाएको मासुजन्य पदार्थ उपभोग नगरौं,
- मासु तथा मासुजन्य पदार्थसँग अन्य खानेकुराको सन्तुलन मिलाएर उपभोग गरौं,



नेपाल सरकार  
**विज्ञापन बोर्ड**



## UPPER ARUN

## Power Of Four Digits

*By signing an MoU to build 1061 MW Upper Arun project under blended finance, Nepal Electricity Authority and its subsidiary UAHEL have pushed Nepal into a new era in the power sector. This is the first four digit project which will be built by Nepal. In the presence of minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, NEA MD and chairperson of AHEL Kul Man Ghising signed the MoU with financial Institutions*

By KESHAB POUDEL

The day was the most important for Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation Pampha Bhusal and Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) Kul Man Ghising in their career.

Following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with local financial institutions under the lead of Hydroelectricity Investment and Development Company Ltd (HIDCL), MD Ghising's main dream to build 1061 MW, the first four digit hydropower project, has come true.

This also starts the construction of Nepal's first 4-digit

hydropower project.

Had Ghising's tenure been extended two years ago, the project would have started last year. For Minister Bhusal, this is a major success as a minister to pave the way for the construction of the largest hydropower project of Nepal.

"This is a matter of pride and historic for me to see the signing of MoU for loan. This is possible due to the efforts of my party's predecessors who also have made contributions to make this event possible," said Minister Bhusal.

In his career as NEA MD in the second year of second ten-

ure, Ghising said the signing of MoU is a highly important event for Nepal and Nepal's hydropower sector.

"We are now in a position to construct a project with four digits capacity. After completion of three-digit hydropower project, Upper Tamakoshi, our confidence has gone up and NEA will complete the project in time," said MD Ghising.

"As the World Bank has already agreed to invest in Upper Arun, the signing of MoU with local financial institutions will open the opportunities," said Ghising. In his first tenure, Ghising added



over 600MW power in the national grid. In this tenure, he signed MoU to construct almost 1700MW of hydro power projects in terms of capacity.

He said that NEA will now construct only big projects and IPPs will be allowed to construct smaller projects.

The 1,061MW semi-reservoirs Upper Arun Hydropower Project to be built in Bhotkhola Rural Municipality of Sankhuwasabha will be promoted as a model project of 'blended financing' (mixed investment model).

(Blended finance is the strategic use of development finance for the mobilization of additional finance towards sustainable development in developing countries. Blended finance attracts commercial capital towards projects that contribute to sustainable

development, while providing financial returns to investors.)

The project is to be built under the leadership of Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) and will ensure participation of the federal government, provincial government, local levels of the project-affected districts, project-affected district residents, general people from all over the country, which is said to a new practice for Nepal as local governments will participate to build the hydropower project in Nepal.

Similarly, concessional loans from international multilateral development partners, and domestic banks and financial institutions will be involved in project financing. The authority will own the majority of shares in the Upper Arun Hydro Electric Company established to build the project.

Upper Arun, which has an estimated cost of \$1.750 billion (about Rs 214 billion), including interest and price increase during the construction period, will be financed by 70 percent debt and 30 percent equity shares.

The developer company has estimated approximately Rs 150 billion rupees loan, Rs 97 billion rupees will be managed by raising concessional loans from multilateral international lenders such as the World Bank and the European Investment Bank, Asian Development Bank, and Rs 53 billion rupees from domestic banks and financial institutions.

According to the NEA, the co-financing of international lenders will be led by the World Bank for the project. Under the leadership of Hydroelectricity Investment and Development Com-



pany (HIDCL), the investment of Rs 53 billion will be made through co-financing from local banks and financial institutions.

Importing hydro mechanical, electromechanical and transmission line equipment of the project from abroad will cost about 30 to 40 percent of the total cost and the said amount will be paid with dollars obtained from foreign investment.

Kulman Ghising, managing director of the NEA and chairman of the promoter Upper Arun Hydro Electric Company, said that semi-reservoir project will be built in the blended financing modality, which will be the first kind of its nature in Nepal. "After the execution of this project, it will create a stir in the overall development of the country."

"In the co-financing led by HIDCL, the private sector banks and financial institutions of Nepal will also provide loans to the project. This will become the first model of blended financing, which will bring a positive movement to



the country's economy," Ghising said, adding, Upper Arun, which has an installed capacity of four digits (1061 megawatts), will produce almost the base of the energy currently consumed in the country.

The HIDCL will manage about Rs 53 billion in the project through co-financing with various banks and financial institutions including Nepal Bank, Rastriya Banijya Bank, Citizen Investment Trust, and Employment Provident

Fund and among others.

Compared with energy generation, the cost of the project is much cheaper. "The project will generate more energy during winter, said Ghising.

According to Joshi, the goal is to prepare the loan investment term sheet within 120 days from the date of signing the agreement and manage the financial closure of the project within one year.

Minister Bhusal said that a detailed study of the project will be completed as soon as possible and construction will start after finalizing the investment issue. "The project is being discussed but will not be constructed for decades. We are making every effort to end this kind of trend and build it for the benefit of the local people," she said.

Secretary of the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, Shusheel Chandra Tiwari, said that the work should be started immediately according to the schedule set for the construction of the project.

The construction of the project is planned to start from December 2081 and be complet-



## COVERSTORY

ed within December 2087. The feasibility study of the project has been completed and the selection of consultants for tender design and construction supervision is underway.

As part of the preliminary preparations for the project, the tenders submitted for the selection of construction contractors are being evaluated to construct about 21 kilometers of access roads including 2 kilometers of tunnels. The access road is being worked on with the goal of starting from next December.

The compensation for the acquisition of 225 hectares of private land required for the project has been determined. About 22 households will be physically displaced by the project. The study has shown that the environmental and social impacts from the construction of the project will be relatively low.

The project is designed to run at full capacity for 6 hours a day during the 6 months of winter when electricity demand is high. The project will produce 4.51 billion units of energy annually.

About 30 percent of this energy will be produced in winter. The generated electricity will be transmitted to the national transmission system through the proposed substation at

Haytar in Sankhuwasabha through 400 kVA transmission line.

Under the lead of Hydroelectricity Investment and Development Company Ltd (HIDCL), a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed for loan investment to the 1061 MW Upper Arun Hydropower Project to be constructed in Sankhuwasabha.

### Upper Arun

The Upper Arun Hydroelectric Limited (UAHEL), a subsidiary of the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), has already invited expressions of interest by 22 May from eligible consulting firms to assist with the development of the 1061 MW Upper Arun project in eastern Nepal.

The project will include the construction of a concrete gravity dam with arc axis on the Arun river, one of the major tributaries of the Sapta Koshi river basin, with a crest elevation of 1653m, a maximum height of 100m, and a total crest length of 183m, to create a peaking reservoir with full supply

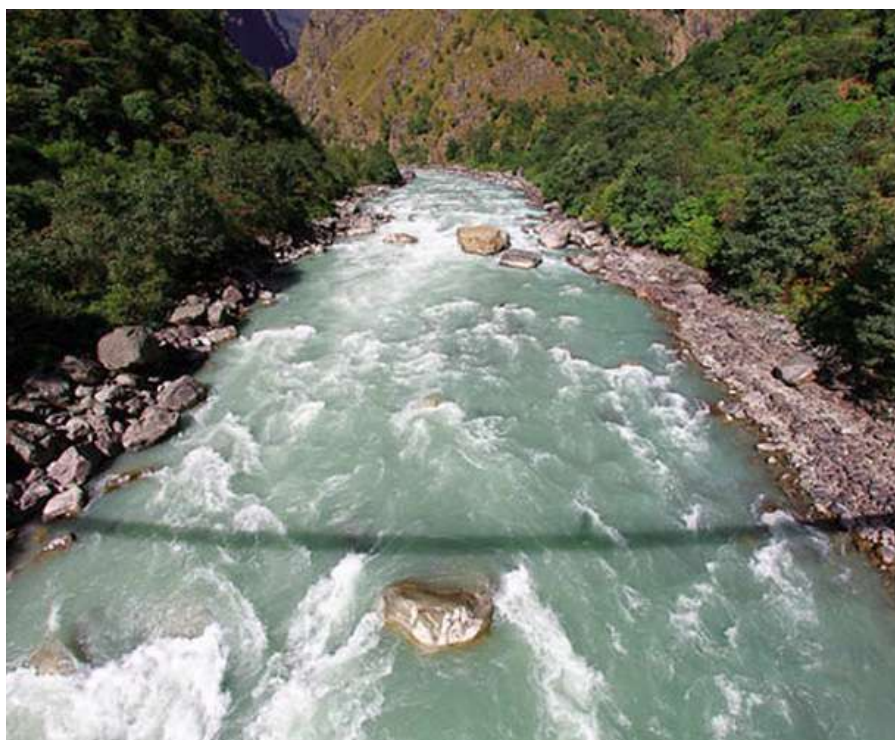
level of 1640m, a minimum operating level of 1625m and peaking pondage of 2.41 million m<sup>3</sup>.

The reservoir with a total capacity of 5.07 million m<sup>3</sup> will be used for peaking power production during the dry season and for sediment trapping to avoid construction of an underground desander. An ungated free overflow spillway will ensure management of floods and Glacial lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) while four low-level and two medium-level outlets within the dam will enable flood and sediment management.

The project will also feature an underground powerhouse on the left bank of the Arun river, about 1.4km upstream of its confluence with the Leksuwa river, to be equipped with six sets of six-nozzle vertical-axis Pelton turbine-generating units each with a rated capacity of 173.33MW. The units will operate under a minimum rated head of 508m and rated flow of 39.24m<sup>3</sup>/s. Water will be supplied to the powerhouse via a 1.4

km-long low pressure head-race tunnel with a diameter of 8.4m.

The locals have been demanding that the construction of the 1,061MW semi-reservoir Upper Arun Hydropower Project in Bhotkhola Rural Municipality of Sankhuwasabha district be started imme-





diately.

To meet growing demands of electricity in the country, NEA has announced to start the construction of Upper Arun Hydroelectric Project from 2021 targeting to complete in 2026.

After assumption of Managing Director post by Ghising, he choose two projects Upper Arun and Dhudkosi two projects as a storage project to meet the demand of picking.

“The implementation of Upper Arun is no on. We are negotiating with Asian Development Bank for the funding of Dhudhkosi Storage project,” said MD Ghising. “We have advanced a process of construction of Upper Arun Hydroelectricity Project placing it under a high priority.”

NEA has called pre-qualification notice to select a Contractor Company for the construction of 24 kilometer access road. The road section include 2 kilometers tunnel and two bridges to reach Chepuwa dam site from Chyangran market point of Biratnagar-Kimathanka (Kosi Highway).

According to working schedule, after evaluation of proposal of interested companies, NEA is planning to seek technical and financial proposal from successful company for pre-qualification.

“We are working with under a work schedule to start the construction of road,” said Ghising,. “A design of access road has

“The money will be no problems. We can manage resources through the financial institutions.”



After pulling out from Arun III, World Bank has not invested on any hydropower project.

Upper Arun project was identified under Kosi Basin Master plan as semi-storage project with capacity of 335 MW and 2.65 billion Unit annual energy. NEA had conducted pre-feasibility study in 1991 and it reviews the pre-feasibility study 2011.

The review showed that the project has capacity of 700 MW with estimated cost US\$ 900 million. Since the project lies in high Himalayan zone, it will have very less effect on human being and less environmental implication. NEA has already pushed 30 MW Ikhuwa Hydro power projects which are going to be a part of Upper Arun.

Minister Bhusal said that a detailed study of the project will be completed as soon as possible and construction will start after finalizing the investment issue. “The project is being discussed but will not be constructed for decades. We are making every effort to end this kind of trend and build it for the benefit of the local people,” she said.

now completed. Our aim is not make any delay in the construction work of main structure of the project.”

According to MD Ghising, NEA has a plan to complete the construction of road within 24 months. NEA will complete the detailed engineering design, selection of contractors and prospective investors in parallel with road construction period.

Comparing with energy generation, the cost of the project is much cheaper. “The project will generate more energy during winter.

The government has already decided to construct the project in company model issuing share to public.

World Bank has already said that it is ready to invest the project constructed through the company issuing share to public.

## EP DELEGATION

# Visit For Cause

*The two-day visit of the European Parliament Delegation is highly important for Nepal*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Instead of waiting for any formal programs, at exactly 4:30 afternoon, members of the European Parliamentary Delegation and Ambassador of the European Union Nona Deprez and staff joined 30 Nepalese young bicycle riders in a parade started from Jawalakhel to Nagbahil organized to mark the 'World Car Free Day On September 22.

Although they arrived just early in the morning from Europe flying an almost seven hours flight, the visiting European Parliamentary (EP) Delegation led by Vice President Evelyn Regner joined the bicycle rally riding bicycles with Nepa-

lese youths on the street of Patan.

Starting from Jawalakhel ground, 6 kilometers south of the capital of Nepal, the bicycle rally ended at the historic and culturally important place Nagbahal after completing about 2 kilometers.

Made for cyclists by Lalitpur Metropolitan City (LMC), the well-marked bicycle lane showed LMC's commitment to a green and pollution-free city.

Along with the REGNER (Austria), Vice President of European Parliament, Ulrike MÜLLER (Germany), Tomáš ZDECHOVSKÝ (Czechia), and Maximilian KRAH (Germany, European Ambassador

to Nepal Deprez and her colleagues from the Embassy followed around 30 Nepalese youth completed the journey showing the importance of bicycle.

For ambassador Deprez, the bicycle lane of Patan is familiar as she has been taking part regularly in the bicycles.

"I was so happy to join the bicycle rally with young Nepalese and travel at the historic city. This is something fascinating for me. Riding bicycles along with Nepalese young and energetic girls gave me immense pleasure and happiness," said VP Evelyn Regner.

After the rally, EP delegate

members participated in a discussion with the members of the Youth Sounding Board on gender, social inclusion and climate change. "This is a really good one to show solidarity with the global community for green develop-





ment,” said Ulrike MÜLLER. This year’s ‘World Car Free Day’ coincides with ‘EU Climate Diplomacy Week’ on Thursday 22nd September.

This is a good opportunity for the board members of The Youth Sounding Board as well. The Youth Sounding Board comprises Youth Innovation Lab, Oxfam Nepal and Helvetas Nepal, as well as development partners working with the EU in Nepal.

### Political Parley

From promoting green and pollution free city encouraging bicycles, the four-member delegation, led by the Parliament’s Vice President Evelyn Regner also met the youth, civil society leaders and political leaders from major political parties including Nepali Congress, CPN-UML and Maoists Center during their two-day visit.

The delegation also met Maoist Center leader Prachanda, Foreign Minister Dr. Narayan Khadka, NC leader Gagan Thapa and UML leader Pradeep Gyawali during their stay.

During their interactions with various groups, the delegation members discussed matters related to inclusion, climate change, participation of women in politics and other issues.

They also discussed the issues of the Russian war and Nepalese solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. This is a short but important visit to Nepal by a high-level European Parliamentary delegation on the eve of national elections.

### “Nepal Is A Beautiful Country “

When did you arrive and how do you see Nepal?

We just arrived on Thursday morning. We have the opportunity to talk to some politicians from different parties. They are very busy with the elections. This is my first visit to



this beautiful country.

Kathmandu is a very lively city. This is also a city of young people. Nepal is a young country which is something great. We condemn the Russian War and we appreciate Nepal’s stand condemning the Russian Invasion and war in Ukraine.

We have heard a lot of things and we will discover them during our two days visit. My picture of Nepal is not completed yet. After my interactions with political leaders and visits to the city, I will explain the full picture.

You are also interacting with young Nepali who will represent Nepal for the coming generation. How do you view this?

I want to see more men and women in politics. I want to see more women in political representation.

How about your delegation members?

We are four member delegation and we share common views. We all see Nepal as a small beautiful country with a lot of potentials. All of us are interested to support Nepal’s development activities further. EU can support Nepal in sustainable energy, hydropower and renewable energy. We won't see how Nepal is

copied energy and food crisis. We are also interested to see Nepal’s agriculture sector and climate change issues. Sustainable agriculture is something important. There are a lot of issues to share.

How do you see women’s participation in Nepali politics?

As a woman parliamentarian myself, I always like to inspire women in politics and be strong. I want to see more women in Nepali politics. However, it seems that it is a long way to go. Since you have a good constitution, what Nepal needs is to apply it.

How do you see common between Austria and Nepal?

My home country Austria and Nepal have so many commonalities as both are mountainous countries. Austria has the Alps mountains and you have the Himalayas. It was a fantastic moment when we saw beautiful high mountains when our plane was approaching to land at TIA. This is something once in my life. It was really great. You have so many beauties a Nepal is a rich country in terms of nature Austria has also some world-renowned mountaineers who visited Nepal and climbed Mountaineers.

BEEN

# Energy Efficient Building

*Implemented by three international partners MinErgy Pvt Ltd, Nepal, Genentech Knowledge Solution Pvt, Ltd, India and Asociacion Espanola de Normalizacion (UNE) Spain with funding from European Union, Building Energy Efficiency in Nepal (BEEN) will help Nepal reduce energy consumption in the urban building and achieve net zero emission*

By A CORRESPONDENT

With faster rates of urbanization and construction of high-energy consumptive building structures, Nepal's ambitious target to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 is difficult to achieve. However, Nepal could achieve its ambitious target by taking certain technical and knowledge-based interventions.

Jointly launched by Minister of Urban Development Met Mani Chaudhary and Ambassador of European Union to Nepal Nona Deprez, Building Energy Efficiency in Nepal (BEEN) aims to support energy-efficient building through policy intervention, improving technical and business capacity and integrating MSMEs and supporting improving and retrofitting 200 buildings in 40 Municipalities of Bagmati, Lumbini and Gandaki Provinces.

As in all the programs, Ambassador of the European Union to Nepal Nona Deprez also keenly interacted with the experts and took a cursory visit to the BEEN marketplace organized to show the new brick technology and its impact to re-

duce carbon.

As the inauguration of the programs was delayed for half an hour, ambassador Deprez found time to query about the technology and how it will fit in Nepal.

Having records of supporting Nepal's overall development programs by providing necessary financial and technical assistance, European Union once again joins in supporting to implementation of the BEEN Project which will be implemented by a consortium led by the University of Innsbruck, Austria.

Three international partners MinErgy Pvt Ltd, Nepal, Genentech Knowledge Solution Pvt, Ltd, India and Asociacion Espanola de Normalizacion (UNE) Spain will work to implement the project.

Addressing the launching program, minister of Urban Development Met Mani Chaudhary thanked European Union for proving support in such an important area. He said that Nepal government believes that this project will contribute to making our building energy efficient and friendly to green development.

Ambassador of the European Union to Nepal Nona Deprez said that European Union has been taking efforts to implement a Green, Resilient and Inclusive Development (GRID) approach. "We are very happy to see the implementation of the project in Nepal which will contrib-

ute to achieving Nepal's net zero emission target."

European Union Ambassador Nona Deprez highlighted the need for implementing the New Urban Agenda, a "shared vision of urban future that should be transformative." She stressed that "the European Union is committed to the science-based policy for cities based on reliable data and invited the Government of Nepal to use introduced urban data tools to lead policy making that will be for the benefit of all people in Nepal."

She further noted the commitment of the European Union to support the advancement of DEGURBA and its application in all countries.

Ambassador of Austria to Nepal Katharina Wieser shared her views visually from New Delhi. She said that Austria and Nepal have many things in common saying that mountains bound us together. She said that Austria will provide the technology to make Nepal green.

Ambassador Wieser said that with proper green technology Nepal's urban areas and cities can support its climate transition and improve energy-efficient technology.

Speaking during the opening of the workshop, Dr. Ram Kumar Phuyal from the Nepal Planning Commission highlighted the significant change in Nepal's urban population – from 17 percent to 66 percent between 2011 and 2021, something that could have been influenced by changes in how urban areas are defined.

Dr. Phuyal holds the view that this project will support Nepal to achieve the goals SDG and Nepal's commitment to the COP. He said that there needs to drastically decrease the energy consumption in the buildings.

"We should rely on data for our





policy and decision-making processes, and BEEN presents us with a unique opportunity to advance towards this,” he said.

Deputy Mayor of Lalitpur Metropolitan City Manjali Shakya Bajracharya expressed the hope that the project will also incorporate Nepal’s own climate-friendly building technology in its program. She said that LMC will fully support the project during its implementation.

BEEN Project manager Daniel Neyer from the University of Innsbruck made welcome remarks highlighting the objective of the event. He said that the project will bring knowledge, technology and necessary skills to construct the climate-friendly and energy-saving buildings.

As Nepal is the fastest urbanizing country in South Asia, with growth rates up to 5 percent per year and the rapid growth combined with inadequate urban management and financing has led to decreased livability.

Executive Director of Alternative Energy Promotion Center (AEPCC) Dr. Madhusudan Adhikari said that this project is compatible with the projects currently undergoing in Nepal aiming to reduce CO<sub>2</sub>.

BEEN Team leader of MinEnergy Suyesh Prajapati in his brief introduction to the project highlighted the overall scenario of Nepal’s urbanization are the area for intervention to bring changes. He said that the project will support Nepal’s NDC and prioritizes low-carbon and resilient urban development.

As the NDC includes specific actions to move Nepal toward greener, more efficient and resilient cities, the country should facilitate integrated institutional architecture for urban development at the national, provincial, and local levels in the context of the transition from a unitary to a federal government structure.

The combination of rapid urbanization and unsustainable and energy-inefficient construction contributes to Nepal’s climate vulnerability and GHG emissions.

The government has identified the construction and building sector as a priority for future climate action. Nepal’s second NDC has set low-carbon and climate-resilient urban settlement adoption targets. The 2017 National Urban Development Strategy estimated an acute need

for upgrading the housing stock, lending urgency to a shift to more resilient and green housing and construction.

In his vote of thanks, Vice-Rector of the University of Innsbruck Dr. Wolfgang Streicher expressed his commitment to sharing knowledge and technology with Nepal to make buildings energy efficient.

Despite promoting green buildings and energy-efficient solutions through the 2012 National Urban Policy and 2017 Urban Development Strategy, Nepal is yet come out with green building guidelines and building codes.

With rapid urbanization and the associated construction of buildings, the design and implementation of green building technology can immensely contribute. This BEEN aims to bring change in its four years of implementation.

Federalization has created additional municipalities and provinces that have further increased the need for a green building policy and legal framework; there is ample opportunity to ensure compliance through both fiscal incentives (taxes) and consistent monitoring. Substantial investments are allocated for the construction of public buildings to provincial and local governments.

The anticipated large-scale construction could help contribute to the government’s GHG emission target through greener construction that has a smaller environmental footprint in terms of carbon, water, natural resources, sustainable materials, and energy use.

The government has promoted green buildings and energy-efficient solutions through the 2012 National Urban Policy and 2017 Urban Development Strategy and is working on the preparation of green building guidelines and building codes.

With rapid urbanization and the associated construction of buildings, the design and implementation of a green



building code and adoption and application of green building certifications (for example, for government and selected private buildings such as hotels) could help reduce emissions associated with construction, create green jobs, and support a climate transition for the construction sector.

Mainstreaming green development in the urban sector, particularly in construction, a major contributor of emissions, and urban planning, is critical to help Nepal achieve the NDC’s 2045 targets.

Only a few private sector companies explore affordable and resilient housing solutions. Private sector engagement is essential to accelerate the uptake of green solutions. This has relevance for the tourism sector, as policies could be set for the hospitality sector to adopt green building certifications as part of their green tourism efforts. To further expand the market, banks will need to provide financing, given the higher up-front cost

Nepal also needs to address gaps in the investment framework for urban municipalities, including the targeting of priority infrastructure investment requirements in strategic urban clusters. Finally, the government should support the emerging urban system by focusing on secondary cities as well as the Kathmandu Valley/

Nepal, a country whose urban population has increased nearly four-fold in a decade, are better equipped to provide harmonized nationwide urban planning and development with efficient energy. With the implementation of BEEN, Nepal will have the knowledge and technology to build more energy-efficient buildings

# It Takes A Community To Deal With Dengue



BY: SANGYA DHAKAL

It takes outbreaks for people to sit up and notice the impacts of microbes on their lives. Since 2020 people all over the world have been affected by the novel Coronavirus. The Covid outbreak is still among us. The new Sars-Cov-2 virus first detected in Wuhan of China quickly spread across the globe. In Nepal, too, over 1 million people have tested positive to this virus and over 12 thousand have lost their lives.

Even as we continue to face covid crisis, this year another microbe has afflicted thousands of people in the country. The Dengue virus has emerged in this late monsoon period infecting thousands of people.

There is one big difference between covid-causing and dengue virus. The coronavirus is transmitted from human to human whereas the dengue virus needs a vector to be transmitted – in this case *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes.

Despite this difference, there are similarities regarding the prevention, detection and treatment. Proper attention towards individual hygiene, and habits can help in the prevention of both diseases to a large extent.

## Cyclical outbreak

The dengue virus was first detected in Nepal in 2004. Ever since, the case load in the subsequent years have continued to increase in a cyclical pattern.

The last big outbreak of dengue in Nepal was seen in 2019. That year more than 18 thousand people were infected by the virus.

This year, the outbreak of dengue appears to be on track to break that record. This week the total number of people infected by dengue has reached around 17 thousand already. The spread is still unabated. Nearly two dozen people have already lost their lives since July.

The months of September and October can still provide the virus with enough time to cause havoc to our communities before the drop in temperature brings the much-needed respite.

## Community Action and Youth Intervention

It takes a community to deal with dengue. From surveillance to prevention and from detection to treatment, the outbreak cannot be controlled by the actions of health authorities alone.

Dengue virus is transmitted by female mosquitoes *Aedes aegypti*. The mosquito is not the main cause of this disease, but only a vector for transmission.

And herein lies the opportunity for the community to intervene. If the community acts collectively to control the vector, the infection can be significantly controlled.

In some of the South Asian countries like India and Bangladesh, the communities were mobilized to disrupt the life-cycle of the mosquitoes. In Delhi, the local government even organized Sunday weekly campaigns urging the people to check their terraces and surroundings for mosquito-breeding places.

In Nepal also, we need coordinated action at community level for similar 'search and destroy' campaigns to destroy the larvae of the mosquito. It can be done by searching for any place

where the mosquitoes can breed.

The authorities, particularly the municipalities, need to involve youths in these activities. The students and youngsters can be mobilized to raise awareness in the community and take collective actions.

Typically, the mosquito breeds in any pool of clean water that is left unattended. Therefore, it is important for the community to search for such places and remove such waters. Even small utensils with small quantity of water may be enough for the mosquitoes to multiply.

On top of that wearing full-sleeved clothes, using mosquito repellants and nets to prevent mosquito bites can significantly reduce the chances of catching the infection.

Once infected, the disease is self-limiting in most cases. People can generally recover in their homes but in some cases they require medical intervention.

During the time of outbreak, the community needs to be involved even in detection and treatment. The local governments like municipalities can set up detection centers and provide temporary camps for treatment. This is important because otherwise the hospitals will become crowded and patients suffering from many other serious illnesses may have to be denied crucial treatment.

## Why is Dengue so serious?

Dengue continues to spread rapidly because of population growth, rapid urbanization and climate change. It is one of the top ten public health threats, according to the WHO.

The global health body estimates that more than 3.9 billion people are at risk of suffering from dengue fever. It is endemic in 129 countries, with about 70% of cases in Asia.

About 0.4 billion people are affected by dengue each year and among them, symptoms are seen in about 0.1 billion people. More than 40,000 people die every year because of dengue. Most dengue cases are not reported because many cases are asymptomatic, mild and self-managed or misdiagnosed.

Dengue in Nepal has been reported in all climatic and weather situations. The cases have been reported mostly from areas where water can be collected and remains stagnant, which is a perfect breeding ground for dengue carrying mosquitoes. With an exception of around two years during the covid when Nepal saw a drop in cases, the rate of dengue in Nepal occurs and fluctuates every couple of years.

Nepal first saw dengue in 2004 in a foreigner, then two years later, Terai regions reported the cases. In 2010, with over 900 cases and five deaths, it turned into an epidemic. In 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 too, dengue was classified as an epidemic affecting over 60 districts.

As Nepal faces another season of dengue outbreak it is important to note that this pattern is likely to repeat in the coming years. Thus, it is important for the community to collectively work to fight this menace. The health authorities need to facilitate the coordination at community level with knowledge on prevention, detection and treatment.



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