

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



OPINION
Dipak Gyawali



ENVIRONMENT
Batu Uprety



VIEWPOINT
Hemant Arjyal

NEW SPOTLIGHT

www.spotlightnepal.com

Jan.- 27, 2023

YETI AIRLINES PLANE CRASH **Ritual Response**

INSIDE



POLITICS
CONSENSUS TO CONTENTIONS



PRITHVI BAHADUR PANDE
UNIFYING THE BANK



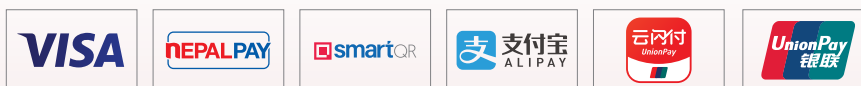
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Kathmandu DAO Regd. No.

148/11/063/64

Central Region Postal Regd.

No. 36/067/068

US Library of Congress Catalogue

No. 91-905060, ISSN : 2091-0711

(Print), ISSN: 2091-0754 (Online)

Printing

Megha Offset Printing Press P. Ltd.,

Dhapasi, Kathmandu

Tel. : 977-1-4363624

Do many people ask how safe the Nepalese sky is? The official answer will be usually positive saying this is one of the safest skies in the world. After the accident of ATR-72, a well-equipped modern aircraft in the clear weather at the well-equipped newly inaugurated new modern airport, Nepalese authorities and ministers have little to defend. For the last three years, due to the influence of few air operators over the political leadership, a bill related to unbundling of the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN) into a regulatory and operational entity is pending in the upper house. There is still uncertainty about when the government will table it to the House of Representatives. Even the newly appointed minister says his priority is to work to start the construction of a new international Airport in Nijgadh and he has not spoken anything on the issue of Air Safety. Given this situation, there is little hope that there will come out something. As the air crash has shocked the nation and international community as well, we have decided to cover the Yeti Airlines Plane Crash is out a cover story for this week. Along with this, we also cover the economic and other issues.

Keshab Poudel

Editor

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Growth 5 Percent

Global Growth To Slow To 1.7% From 3% Expected Six Months Ago In 2023, Nepal Will Also Suffer: The World Bank

By A CORRESPONDENT

Global growth is slowing sharply in the face of elevated inflation, higher interest rates, reduced investment, and disruptions caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, according to the World Bank's latest Global Economic Prospects report.

Given fragile economic conditions, any new adverse development—such as higher-than-expected inflation, abrupt rises in interest rates to contain it, a resurgence of the COVID-19 pandemic, or escalating geopolitical tensions—could push the global economy into recession. This would mark the first time in more than 80 years that two global recessions have occurred within the same decade.

The global economy is projected to grow by 1.7% in 2023 and 2.7% in 2024. The sharp downturn in growth is expected to be widespread, with forecasts in 2023 revised down for 95% of advanced economies and nearly 70% of emerging market and developing economies.

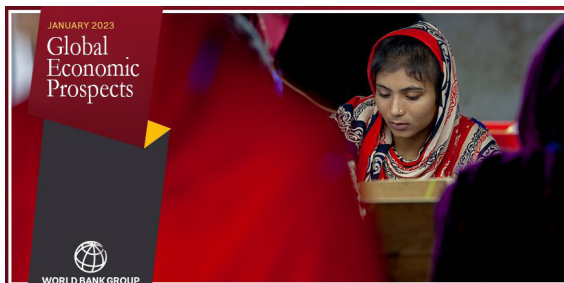
So far Nepal is concerned, Nepal's economy will be stable with a growth projection of 5.1 percent.

Over the next two years, per-capita income growth in emerging markets and developing economies is projected to average 2.8%—a full percentage point lower than the 2010-2019 average. In Sub-Saharan Africa—which accounts for about 60% of the world's extremely poor—growth in per capita income over 2023-24 is expected to average just 1.2%, a rate that could cause poverty rates to rise, not fall.

“The crisis facing development is intensifying as the global growth outlook deteriorates,” said World Bank Group President David Malpass. “Emerging and developing countries are facing a multi-year period of slow growth driven by heavy debt burdens and weak investment as global capital is absorbed by ad-

vanced economies faced with extremely high government debt levels and rising interest rates. Weakness in growth and business investment will compound the already-devastating reversals in education, health, poverty, and infrastructure and the increasing demands from climate change.”

Growth in advanced economies is projected to slow from 2.5% in 2022 to 0.5% in 2023. Over the past two decades, slowdowns of this scale have foreshadowed a global recession. In the United States, growth is forecast to fall to 0.5% in 2023—1.9 percentage points below previous forecasts and the weakest performance outside of official recessions since 1970.



In 2023, euro-area growth is expected at zero percent—a downward revision of 1.9 percentage points. In China, growth is projected at 4.3% in 2023—0.9 percentage points below previous forecasts.

Excluding China, growth in emerging markets and developing economies is expected to decelerate from 3.8% in 2022 to 2.7% in 2023, reflecting significantly weaker external demand compounded by high inflation, currency depreciation, tighter financing conditions, and other domestic headwinds.

By the end of 2024, GDP levels in emerging and developing economies will be roughly 6% below the levels expected before the pandemic. Although global inflation is expected to moderate, it will remain above pre-pandemic levels.

The report offers the first comprehensive assessment of the medium-term outlook for investment growth in emerging markets and developing econ-

omies. Over the 2022-2024 period, gross investment in these economies is likely to grow by about 3.5% on average—less than half the rate that prevailed in the previous two decades. The report lays out a menu of options for policymakers to accelerate investment growth.

“Subdued investment is a serious concern because it is associated with weak productivity and trade and dampens overall economic prospects. Without strong and sustained investment growth, it is simply impossible to make meaningful progress in achieving broader development and climate-related goals,” said Ayhan Kose, Director of the World Bank's Prospects Group. “National policies to boost investment growth need to be tailored to country circumstances, but they always start with establishing sound fiscal and monetary policy frameworks and undertaking comprehensive reforms in the investment climate.”

The report also sheds light on the dilemma of 37 small states—countries with a population of 1.5 million or less. These states suffered a sharper COVID-19 recession and a much weaker rebound than other economies, partly because of prolonged disruptions to tourism. In 2020, economic output in small states fell by more than 11%—seven times the decline in other emerging and developing economies. The report finds that small states often experience disaster-related losses that average roughly 5% of GDP per year. This creates severe obstacles to economic development.

Policymakers in small states can improve long-term growth prospects by bolstering resilience to climate change, fostering effective economic diversification, and improving government efficiency. The report calls upon the global community to assist small states by maintaining the flow of official assistance to support climate-change adaptation and help restore debt sustainability.

NEWSNOTES

Indian External Affairs Minister Congratulated Newly Appointed Nepali Foreign Minister

External Affairs Minister of India Dr. S. Jaishankar congratulated the newly appointed foreign minister of Nepal Dr. Bimala Rai Poudyal.

“Congratulations Dr. Bimala Rai Paudyal on your appointment as the Foreign Minister of Nepal,” tweeted minister Dr. S. Jaishankar.

In her reply, Nepali foreign minister Dr. Rai Paudyal Thank Minister Dr. S. Jayashankar

“Thank you Minister of External Affairs of India



@DrSJais-hankar for the warm words of wishes. Look forward to working closely with you to further consolidate Nepal-India ties,” min-

ister Rai Paudyal tweets. “I too look forward to working with you.”

Tribute Pays To Dor Bahadur Bishta Showing A Documentary On Him

Although he disappeared almost 40 years ago and his where about is yet to be revealed, Nepal’s renowned anthropologist Dor Bahadur Bishta is still a highly respected intellectual figure of Nepal.

Politician Keshar Bahadur Bishta, son of Dor Bahadur Bishta, and his family members have been searching for his missing father and scholar Bishta. Nobody finds any traces of his missing person till now.

As Dor Bahadur Bishta’s birthday is celebrated annually by organizing scholarly programs, this year’s birthday was celebrated with different programs depicting a documentary about him.



Directed by Sachin Ghimire and Gaurav KC, a young film director, a documentary on the life of anthropologist Dor Bahadur Bishta, “Ma Alap Hoon Hoon—

Into the Mist” was seen on the occasion of his birthday!

“Many thanks and congratulations to the entire team including the director @sachinshamvab and Gaurav KC for making the documentary with great depth and sensitivity,” Tweets Manushi.

“Anthropologist Dor Bahadur used to say to friends/relatives -”I want to disappear. Today we explore the meaning of her disappearance. We searched for the answer we found after he disappeared. Look at the seat, the floor and the door, thank you!” tweets Movie Lovers.

UML’s Devraj Ghimire was Elected As Speaker Of The House Of Representatives

C P N

UML’s Devraj Ghimire has been elected as the speaker of the House of Representatives (HoR).

From the voting of the speaker on Thursday Ghimire has been elected as the speaker of HoR.



Ghimire received 167 votes whereas his competitor Ishwari Devi Neupane from Nepali Congress received 100 votes. One vote was cast in neutral.

A total of 268 members were presented.

75th Indian Army Day Celebrated In Kathmandu

Defense Wing, Embassy of India in Nepal hosted a banquet on the occasion of the 75th Indian Army Day.

The Indian Army Day is celebrated in recognition of Lieutenant General (Later Field Marshal) KM Cariappa being appointed the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army on 15 January 1949.

Chief of Army Staff of Nepal Army General Prabhuram Sharma, Honorary General of the Indian Army, was the Chief Guest at the function. The event was also attended by former Army Chiefs of Nepal, serving and retired army officers, officers from the diplomatic community, and officials from the government of Nepal and the press corps.

At the event, Naveen



Srivastava, the Ambassador of India to Nepal, recalled the lasting bond between Indian Army and the Nepali Army that binds the two countries. Expressing gratitude for the selfless service and sacrifice of Nepali soldiers in the Indian Army, he reiterated India's commitment to the welfare of Indian Army pensioners and their families residing in Nepal.

COAS General Prabhu Ram Sharma conveyed his greetings to General Manoj Pande, COAS Indian Army and Honorary General of the Nepali Army, on the occasion of the 75th Indian Army Day & congratulated General Anil Chauhan, on being appointed the second CDS of India.

He highlighted the intimate relationship between the two armies and appreciated the support of the Indian Army to the Nepali Army in niche skill development. General Prabhu Ram Sharma also felicitated the valiant gallantry awardee Nepalese soldiers of the Indian Army.

Italian Prime Minister Meloni Expressed Deep Condolence Over Death In Plain Crash In Nepal

Giorgia Meloni, prime minister of Italy, expressed deep condolence to the victims and sincere sympathy to the bereaved families of the plane crash in Pokhara on January 15.



“Our thoughts, at the painful time, and with those who lost their lives in this tragic accident and with their families,” said Prime Minister of Italy Giorgia Meloni in her Tweet.

The aircraft of

Yeti Airlines crashed in Pokhara while at the landing stage on January 15 with 72 passengers including 4 crew members on board.

NA Chair Timilsina and Chinese Ambassador Discusses Nepal-China Relations

China's Ambassador to Nepal, Chen Song, paid a courtesy call to National Assembly (NA) Chair Ganesh Prasad Timilsina.

During the meeting held at the latter's office in Singha Durbar, the NA Chair said Nepal and China had close relations since the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two close neighbors. He said he was happy to see the bilateral relationship becoming more consolidated, cordial and constructive lately.

“Both nations have accorded much priority to historic bilateral relations, cooperation and collaboration,” he



said, adding, “Nepal is committed to the ‘one-China’ policy. We are committed not to let happen any activity against China's deep concern and affairs in our territory.”

Praising China for achieving continuous progress, the NA Chair expressed his belief that agreements were reached between the two countries during high-level visits and other occasions including the Belt and Road Initiative and the agreement on transit.

On the occasion, the NA Chair welcomed the resumption of Nepal-China trade disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and landslides and floods.

At present, two-way trade resumption at the Kerung-Rasuwa Gadhi transit has further strengthened bilateral relations between Nepal and China. One-way trade has resumed at Hilsa-Purang transit as well. It is believed that this would ease the living of the people at the border and promote trade between the two countries. “There is a need to manage imports through Tatopani-Jangmu and other transits in the days to come,” he said.

Similarly, the operation of the Pokhara International Airport would contribute significantly to the country's tourism, said Chair Timilsina.

“To balance trade between Nepal and China, there is a need for both countries to speed up the implementation of the projects underway with the help of the Chinese government, and to prioritize the availability of additional development assistance for reconstructions post-COVID-19. For this, I believe your excellency will play an important role.”

In response, the Ambassador expressed his happiness over the long cultural, mutual and diplomatic relations between China and Nepal going smoothly irrespective of any political situation.

For further consolidating relations between the two countries, he stressed the need for the exchange of high-level political visits, the construction of strategic networks and the implementation of various agreements including the Belt and Road Initiative. He also pledged to play a role from his side for cooperation between the parliaments and the governments of both countries. (RSS)

NEWSNOTES

British Ambassador Pays Courtesy Call On PM Prachanda

British Ambassador to Nepal, Nicola Pollitt, paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' at Baluwatar.

During the meeting, they exchanged views on further deepening the bilateral relations between the two countries.

RSS adds that various topics related to bilateral



relations were discussed in the meeting that took place at the Prime Minister's official residence at Baluwatar, PM

Prachanda's Secretariat has said.

ATR Manufacturer Company's Experts In Nepal Yeti Plane Crashed

A team of experts from an ATR aircraft manufacturer company in France has arrived in Nepal to carry out a study about the Yeti Air plane crash that happened on Sunday in Pokhara.

Secretary at the Ministry of Civil Aviation Suresh Adhikari said that a nine-member team of experts of the ATR aircraft builder arrived in Nepal and reached Pokhara city itself.

Meanwhile, the government has already formed a five-member commission to investigate the Yeti Air plane crash in Pokhara that killed altogether 72 persons on board



including 68 passengers and four crew members.

ISA Award Has Helped To Recognise The Role Of Nepalis In Dr. Ruit

Nepal's renowned Ophthalmologist Dr. Sanduk



Ruit has been awarded the prestigious Isa award for his services to humanity. Dr. Ruit has been awarded based on his service to humanity by reducing the rate of preventable blindness by half in Nepal through cheap treatment methods.

The award is granted every two years to either individuals or organizations who have been selected through a tough process by an expert panel of jurists.

Among the nominees for the award, this year was the WHO Foundation. Dr. Ruit was nominated by the jurists based on his initiative due to which many blind people have seen the world. He was recognized as he has helped many people in Asia and other parts of the world to see through cataract surgery.

The award for Service to Humanity, established in 2009, has the King of Bahrain Sheikh Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa as 'Honorary President'. The organization has been presenting this award since 2013 and Dr. Ruit is the recipient of the fifth edition of the award.

Meanwhile, talking at a press conference here on Wednesday, Dr. Ruit informed us that he is more than happy to receive the award as it is the best recognition of his hard work spanning over 30 years by the world platform.

"I feel so delighted to be awarded such a prestigious award. The award has also helped to recognize the role of Nepalis in the international platform," said Dr. Ruit. It has also worked as advocacy for treatable blindness around the globe, he added.

He said that receiving an international award for his work in eye health was not a matter of pride for him personally, but for the nation as a whole.

According to Dr. Ruit, the award, established in the name of Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the former king of Bahrain, is given every two years to an individual or organization active in the field of human welfare from around the world.

Dr. Ruit has developed a simple method to treat patients with cataracts. He also invented intraocular lenses and made them available at affordable prices. Millions of people with blindness in developing countries, including

Nepal, have been able to see due to his treatment skill.

The prominent figure, Dr. Ruit studied medicine in India and got a gold medal in surgery during his MBBS. He received the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 2006. In 2018, he was awarded the Padma Shri award by the Government of India.

He had also received Bhutan's highest honor, the National Order of Merit, for playing a role in restoring the sight of hundreds of people and preventing blindness.

He also received the Prime Minister's National Talent Award in Nepal in 2075 B.S and the well-known Prabal Jana Sewa Shree Medal in 2077 B.S.

Chinese President Xi Jinping Sends Message Of Condolence To President Bhandari

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday sent a message of condolence to Nepali President Bidya Devi Bhandari over a plane crash in the country.



A press statement of the Chinese Embassy, of January 17, stated that in his message, Xi said that upon learning of the plane crash in

Nepal, which caused heavy casualties, he would like to express deep condolences over the fatalities and offer sincere sympathies to the bereaved families on behalf of the Chinese government and people.

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang on Monday sent a message of condolence to Nepalese Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal.

French Delegation Pays A Courtesy Call On Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal

Director for Asia and Oceania at the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs Bertrand Lortholary called on the Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal at his office.



Views were exchanged on further en-

riching engagements in trade and investment, technology transfer and other areas of mutual interest.

Israeli Envoy Michal Weiler- Tal Visited Nepal

Ms. Michal Weiler- Tal, Director of the South-East Asia Department from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), Israel, arrived for a three-day official visit (15-17 Jan 2023) to Nepal, reaffirming the longstanding friendly relations between both countries.



Weiler Tal met with high-ranking officials at the MoFA Nepal including Bharat Raj Paudyal, Foreign Secretary. They discussed bilateral and multilateral cooperation and explored the possibilities of collaboration for mutual benefit in the future.

Israeli Ambassador Hanan Goder hosted a reception in Ms. Weiler-Tal's honor at his residence. Political leaders, government officials, media personnel, agro-experts, educationists, and other dignitaries were in attendance.

The Embassy believes that the visit will enhance the existing cooperation and bring fruitful outcomes benefiting both nations.

Chinese Ambassador To Nepal Calls On Prime Minister Prachanda

Newly appointed Chinese Ambassador to Nepal, Chen Song paid a courtesy call to Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'.

During the meeting held at the Prime Minister's

official residence in Baluwatar, Ambassador Song congratulated the Prime Minister on behalf of the Chinese President, the Vice President and the Pre-



NEWSNOTES

mier. He also conveyed greetings for the New Year 2023 and said that China would always be with Nepal on her path of stability, development and prosperity, according to the Prime Minister's Secretariat.

On the occasion, Prime Minister Dahal expressed his gratitude for the Chinese cooperation, friendship and fraternity while extending his best wishes for the success and progress of the President, the Premier and the people of China. (RSS)

US, and Chinese Ambassadors Express Sorrow Over Deaths In Plane Crash

The US and Chinese ambassadors have expressed sorrow over the death of passengers in the plane crash in Pokhara.

"I would like to express my deep condolences to the victims and sincere sympathies to the bereaved families," said the Chinese ambassador to Nepal Chen Song on his Twitter.

"Very shocked to learn that a Yeti Airlines aircraft crashed in Pokhara, resulting in heavy casualties. At these difficult times, our thoughts are with Nepali people," said the Chinese ambassador.



In its Twitter handle, the US Embassy said, "We are deeply saddened by the tragic Yeti Airlines crash in Pokhara this morning. We are monitoring the situation carefully. We are not aware of any US citizens on board. Our hearts go out to the victims and families."

Japan Provided Grant For Infrastructure Facilities For Water Disaster Risk Reduction

New infrastructure facilities for water disaster reduction have been constructed in Madi Municipality, Chitwan district as part of a project supported by the Japanese Government under the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects schemes.

The project is being implemented by the Japanese NGO Shapla Neer - Citizens' Community in Japan for

Overseas Support, and it is currently in its final year.



The project aims at reducing water-induced disaster risks in Chitwan based on the 'one-river one community' concept and supports strengthening the disaster resilience capacity of the local government and communities.

Nepal has experienced many disasters in the past, and implementing disaster prevention measures is an important matter to protect lives and property. Japan has experienced many disasters as well and has taken advantage of this knowledge to assist Nepal.

The handover ceremony for infrastructure facilities for reducing water-induced disaster risks took place on January 10. On the occasion, Kikuta Yutaka, Ambassador of Japan to Nepal, sent a congratulatory message to all involved in the project.

He recognized the efforts of all who worked with Shapla Neer to complete the project. He also expressed his hope that this structure and community organization will become an asset in disaster prevention and will function to protect your lives and property in the event of an emergency.

Ambassador Kikuta noted that 2022 was the 120th year since Nepal dispatched its first eight students to Japan for study, and expressed his pleasure at being able to celebrate the completion of the project at the beginning of the following year with the same spirit of the wonderful anniversary. He added his hope that the results of this project will contribute greatly to the exchange between the two countries and the development of Nepal.

The Embassy of Japan in Nepal hopes that the assistance further strengthens the relationship between Japan and Nepal, and the friendship between the peoples of the two countries for future generations.

Indian Embassy Organizes Vishwa Hindi Diwas

The Embassy of India, Kathmandu and the Central Hindi Department of Tribhuvan University (TU) jointly organized Vishwa Hindi Diwas at the Embassy premises. The event was attended by Prasanna Srivastava, Deputy Chief of Mission of the Embassy and Dr. Sanjeeta Verma, head of the Hindi Department, TU representing the Embassy and the University respectively.

Member of Parliament and President, Hindi Manch Nepal, Mangal Prasad Gupta, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. In his address, he opined that Hindi has played an important role in deepening the cultural ties between Nepal and India. He also underlined the global importance of Hindi and its relevance in the international arena.

India's distinguished linguist Dr. Vimlesh Kanti Verma, Nepal's senior Hindi litterateur and scholar Ganga Prasad Akela and Dr. Ram Dayal Rakesh were Guests of Honour in the program.



Dr. Vimlesh Kanti Verma in his address shared his experience on Hindi research, particularly in respect of its history, its connection with other international languages and its evolution in contemporary times.

Deputy Chief of Mission read out the message of the Honorable Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi for the occasion. He remarked that World Hindi Day reminds us of the linguistic heritage and identity of Hindi speakers. He expressed his gratitude to Hindi enthusiasts, scholars and litterateurs of Nepal who have contributed in further strengthening Nepal-India friendship through Hindi.

As a part of the program, Hindi poetry recitation was organized for various schools of Kathmandu where students recited impactful poetry on the theme 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'. TU's M.A. students of the Hindi Department were also felicitated on the occasion.

Music students of Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre, Kathmandu gave a group performance. Dr. Asawar Bapat, Director of Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre delivered a talk on the Devnagari script and its features which makes it unique. Hindi professors of Tribhuvan University Dr. Shweta Deepti and Manchala Jha highlighted the importance of Hindi in Nepal-India relations in their addresses.

Nepal-India Kavi Sammelan was also organized in the second session of the program in which distinguished poets recited poetry in Hindi, Urdu and Nepali languages

and enthralled the audience.

Vishwa Hindi Diwas has its underpinnings in the first World Hindi Conference that was organized on 10 January 1975 in Nagpur, India. Therefore Vishwa Hindi Diwas is globally celebrated every year on 10 January.

Nepal Army Honor Prithvi Narayan Shah

The Nepal Army (NA) is marking the 301st birth anniversary of its founder Prithvi Narayan Shah across the country by organizing several programs.

In this connection, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Prabhuram Sharma is unveiling the full-body-size statue of nation builder Shah on the premises of the Gorkha Palace, according to Nepal Army Spokesperson Krishna Prasad Bhandari. The Gorkha municipality and the NA are jointly hosting the program.

As informed, the NA has been offering a guard of honor to the nation-builder Prithvi Narayan Shah by sounding the bugle in the Gorkha Palace in the morning and evening every day.

Meanwhile, the NA has been annually organizing a 'unification march' following the same route that the nation-builder used during the unification of Nepal, coinciding with the Prithvi Jayanti since 2076 BS. The march that started from Gorkha on January 5 this year arrived in the Hanumandhoka Palace through Dhading and Nuwakot earlier.

The attendees of the march will travel around the city from Hanumandhoka on Wednesday and participate in the special function to be organized near the full-body-size statue of Prithvi Narayan in the Army Headquarters. The NA would offer tributes to its founder with a guard of honor.

Likewise, President Bidya Devi Bhandari, who is the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Nepal Army, is scheduled to offer floral tributes and honor to the na-



tion-builder at his statue in front of the Singha Durbar.

The government has announced a public holiday on the occasion of the Prithvi Jayanti after a gap of several years.

BUSINESS BRIEF

Nepal-France Bilateral Consultation Mechanism Meeting Concluded

The third meeting of the Nepal-France Bilateral Consultation Mechanism was held in Kathmandu today. A wide range of matters relating to bilateral relations and cooperation between the two countries were discussed during the meeting led by the Joint Secretary at the Ministry Ms. Sewa Lamsal on the Nepali side and Director for Asia and Oceania at the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs Bertrand Lortholary on the French side.

The Nepali delegation included the officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Finance, Forest and Environment as well as Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation while the French delegation included the Ambassador of France in Kathmandu and other officials.

The two sides reviewed the overall state of bilateral relations. They discussed ways and means to enhance bilateral trade and investment, transfer of technology and tourism

for mutual benefit as well as measures for economic recovery after the Covid-19 pandemic. The centuries-old cultural exchange and the ever-in-

creasing people-to-people contact were also discussed during the meeting.

The Nepali side shared about the country's graduation from the LDC status in 2026 and the preparation of the transition strategy and requested for the continuation of support measures provided by France as well as the EU in terms of market access and development cooperation.

The meeting adopted the Nepal-France Green Roadmap which emphasizes, among other areas, the importance of developing renewable energy projects, investing in low-carbon and resilient infrastructure, protecting forests, acting to prevent natural disasters and incorporating climate change adaptation into national, local and sectoral planning documents.

The two sides also discussed possible cooperation in mutually beneficial areas at the multilateral level.

World Vision International Nepal Launches A Podcast Series Stories Of Innovations

World Vision International Nepal has produced eleven episodes podcast series – Stories of Innovation in the podcast ecosphere. This innovative endeavor has been disseminated through a national-level event in the presence of podcast guests, media personnel, private sectors, members of peer organizations, government, donors, civil society organizations

(CSOs), and like-minded organizations.

The podcast series features local as well as international innovation practitioners, leaders in the area of development and many other well-known faces from Nepal and beyond.

The core focus of the podcast series is to shed light on developments happening in the areas of humanitarian innovation across the world. The

National Director of World Vision International Nepal, Roslyn H. Gabriel said, "Through the podcast, the organization aims to preposition World Vision as a thought leader in the space of humanitarian innovation, private sector collaboration, and social entrepreneurship." Moreover, the organization has been successful in creating a synergy between various entities working in the space of innovation to come up with unique solutions that will aid the humanitarian cause.

A panel discussion was also hosted which had Member Secretary of National Planning Commission Kewal Prasad Bhandari, CEO of Sochi Bonita Sharma, Founder of Smart Pani Suman Shakya and Co-Founder of Urban Girls, Nikita Acharya as the panelists.

The Stories of Innovation will be hosted for the global audience in podcast platforms including the official youtube channel of World Vision International Nepal, Spotify and apple podcast channel.

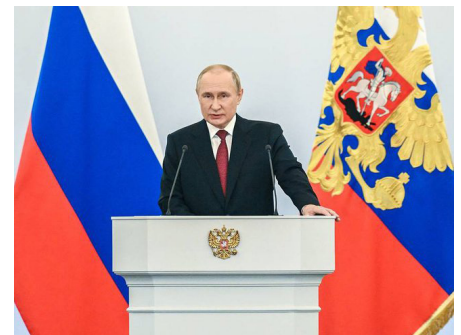


Russian President Putin Expresses Sorrow Over Pokhara Plane Crash

Russian President Vladimir Putin has expressed sorrow over the deaths of people in the plane crash in Nepal.

"Please accept our deepest condolences in connection with the tragic consequences of the crash of a passenger plane near the city of Pokhara," Russian President Putin wrote in a condolence message to President Bidya Devi Bhandari, according to the Russian news agency, Interfax.

Please convey the words of sincere sympathy and support to the families and friends of those killed in this terrible plane crash, the Russian President said, according to the website of the Kremlin.



Nepal's Balance Of Payment Makes A Progress

The Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) report showed that the balance of payment (BoP) has remained a surplus of Rs 45.87 billion at the end of mid-December 2022/23.

According to the NRB's Current Macroeconomic and Financial Situation report of mid-December 2022/23, the BoP stayed at a surplus of Rs 45.87 billion in the review period compared to a deficit of Rs 195.01 billion in the same period of the previous fiscal year (FY).



In US Dollar terms, the BoP has remained at a surplus of USD 346.8 million in the review period against a deficit of USD 1.64 billion in the

same period of the previous FY.

Similarly, the current account deficit has decreased to Rs.37.91 billion from a deficit of Rs 298.51 billion in the same period of the previous FY.

However, in the review period, capital transfer decreased 25.3 percent to Rs 3.47 billion and net foreign direct investment (FDI) remained at Rs 604.9 million. The report showed that in the same period of the previous FY, capital transfer and net FDI amounted to Rs 4.64 billion and Rs 7.07 billion respectively.

Lumbini Cable Car Will Start From February: Chandra Prasad Dhakal

Chairman of Lumbini Cable Car Private Limited Chandra Prasad Dhakal said that civil work of the cable car towers had almost been completed and it would be brought into operation in February.

Dhakal announced this at the company's 19th annual general meeting held in Kathmandu on Friday. The Lumbini cable car starts at Butwal in the Rupandehi district and ends at Basantpur in the Palpa district.



"Civil works of the cable car towers have been completed and the construction works in the temple area at the top station are moving ahead at high speed," he said.

He said that the import of all the gondolas and equipment of the cable car has been completed. Gondolas have been fixed in seven of nine

towers while in the remaining two towers, gondola fixing work has reached the final stage.

Likewise, the installation of equipment for the cable car has been completed at the top station, while the installation work of cable car equipment at the bottom station is progressing, he said.

He also said that construction and electromechanical installation works are progressing rapidly. The construction of the cable car project has begun in January last year.

Coca-Cola Concludes Saksham Training Program Benefiting Over 1000 women

Coca-Cola has successfully concluded its Saksham training program which reached over 1000 women entrepreneurs from small and medium-scale businesses in retail and restaurants, providing them with a platform for empowerment and skill development.

'Saksham' was officially launched on 8th March 2022 (International Women's Day), by Coca-Cola along with its bottling partner Bottlers Nepal Limited to provide equal opportunities to compete in the marketplace. The Saksham program was designed to build the capacity of women retailers and women-owned small restaurant owners on financial literacy, hospitality, sanitation management and the use of the digital wallet. The one-day training session was conducted across cities in Provinces 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Geeta Shrestha from Sauraha shared her experience,

"Saksham training is an inspiring session for young women entrepreneurs. I started my own



business with just Rs. 160 about 44 years ago. With my hard work, I have been able to fulfill my dreams where I am now an owner of 2 houses along with a store and proudly able to support my family as a single woman".

Similarly, Maya Pandey from Narayanghat expressed, "The Saksham program provides us with skills to be economically empowered and has helped us build more networks over the years. Skill development programs like Saksham have encouraged me in doing business more efficiently".

Adarsh Awasthi, Country Director of Coca-Cola in Nepal shared, "At Coca-Cola, we believe in a better-shared future, and women empowerment is core to our values. We launched the Saksham training program in 2022 where we partnered with a proficient trainer to provide business skills training, mentoring networks, financial services and other assets to help women entrepreneurs improve their livelihoods, families and communities. We are happy that we have crossed our initial target of 1000 women entrepreneurs and will strive to further empower more women in the near future."

Why Focus On Water Storage?



BY: DIPAK GYAWALI

By including [water in the COP27 declaration](#), the global climate community has recognized, after nearly three decades, that the climate change problem is a water problem, which is a crisis that was created by the energy sector with its impact on society felt through the water sector. And that impact is much wider than just that of too much water (floods) or too little (droughts). Given water's ubiquitous role in ALL life process, human and non-human, any deviation from the expected normal is bound to produce cascading impacts in areas many times removed from the original point of perturbation.

A pertinent example comes from microbiology and the health sector: higher temperatures and changes in precipitation regimes mean that microbes and viruses that affect plants and animals – such as malaria, dengue and plant diseases – are now found in areas that historically never had them. Even water engineering takes a hit: because climate change is saying that the future will not be like the past, hydro-technical design framed around massaging past (limited and often unreliable) data to make future 500- or 1000-year flood and drought probability projections is philosophically untenable, especially for mega projects.

One way of conceptualizing the climate problem is to think of the atmosphere as a glass kettle on a stove: if it is simmering, the warm water rises up and cold water sinks in a gentle circulation. That is what the atmosphere was like before climate change. Now, with so much heat energy trapped within it, it bubbles ebulliently even throwing the lid off, with moisture-carrying winds swinging wildly away from normal paths as happened with last summer's monsoon downpour in areas of otherwise semi-arid Pakistan. And it is not only warm moisture-laden air that swings to areas that normally don't experience them, and conversely depriving areas that normally received them from much needed precipitation: very cold polar vortexes are also swinging much more towards semi-tropical places like Florida to balance the over-heated southern hemisphere. These anomalies are slated to become the new normal.

UN's flagship World Water Assessment Program which brings together all the myriad UN agencies and collaborative partners to annually assess water-related themes devoted its [2020 World Water Assessment Report](#) to climate change. Whereas previously water issues were seen

in climate terms as only matters of adaptation, of coping with increased floods and droughts, this study argues that water management is critical for climate mitigation as well. Significant greenhouse gas reduction is possible through proper wastewater recycling and nutrient/resource recovery, through conservation agriculture suited to ecologically appropriate crops, and opting for nature-based solutions such as wetlands protection especially via transboundary cooperation by pooling resources for larger impact including using climate funding more judiciously. In the face of climate crisis, proper husbanding of water resources, especially through storage, is key to facing this unfolding disaster.

Recently International Water Management Institute (IWMI) took this idea of improved water security in view of climate and other challenges in the days further ahead by reviving the idea of pluralism in water storage that it had championed almost a decade and a half ago. Instead of seeing water storage only in terms of built infrastructure especially large dams, it argued for policy attention towards groundwater aquifers, preservation of soil moisture, natural wetlands, snowpacks as well as traditional small-scale ponds and tanks. Not only are these different storage types context and ecology specific, they are also championed by very different social carriers. Large dams are the prerogative of hydrocrats in government agencies, whereas protection and preservation of common pool resources such as groundwater and wetlands (as well as household and village-level rainwater harvesting structures) are the concerns of activists in civic movements. Lacking a common policy platform for constructive engagement where all disparate voices are heard and responded to, there is little chance such a plural approach will succeed.

In understanding the pluralism of water, it is helpful to see the global water cycle in terms of its different colours. The first, and often much ignored by policy makes is *White Water*, the water that is in clouds, atmospheric moisture and in what are called "sky rivers" that transport enormous amounts of water across the oceans and continents. It is the primary source of all the waters we use or are concerned with. *Green Water* is water in soil moisture from precipitation of *White Water*, and it sustains all our forests, grasslands, terrestrial wildlife and dryland rainfed

agriculture.

Blue Water, which is the surface water in streams, springs, rivers and lakes as well as snow and ice melt, is the water that has hegemonized much of public policy discourse and funding. Because it is available in easy, concentrated form, it is the water that sees allocation conflicts between countries and sectors such as irrigated agriculture, industries, tourism, domestic use etc. Then there is *Brown Water* (pumped

groundwater which is the largest volume of stored freshwater worldwide) on which depend much of irrigated agriculture, water supply for domestic household uses as well as processing industries (including shale oil and gas that has revived US as an oil-producing superpower). It is the subject of 2022 WWDR which makes the case for its better policy visibility as a common pool resource of which governments must see themselves as custodians.

Then there are two other colours of water that are wrongly called wastewater (as the 2017 WWDR argues) that are a major source of environmental pollution if untreated but a major reusable byproducts of both water, nutrients and resources if recovered by treatment. They are *Grey Water*, which is water from household use that is mostly organic and easily recyclable; and *Black Water* which is industrial wastewater that needs serious recycling but, as research in Bangalore's ATREE has shown, can be locked with minimal treatment into cement in road paving and other constructions without being dumped into rivers and lakes, thus polluting available freshwater.

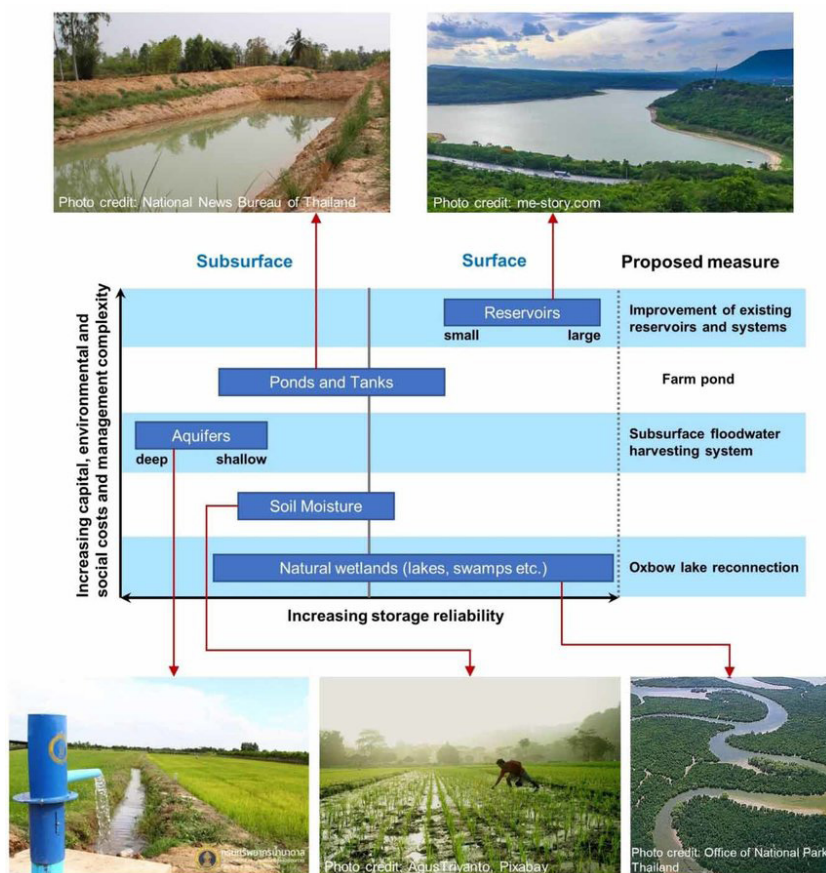
Thus, it becomes apparent that water security through water storage has to be seen very differently from just storage behind cement and other dams. Water resource-

management and development have to be broadened to re-examine the planning and policy processes through new concepts of virtual water, water footprints and the nexus approach. Much of the climate debate of mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions will have to be re-thought from the perspectives of consumption: yes, Chinese and Indian annual emissions are today among the highest in the

world; but they pale into much lesser levels globally if seen in per capita terms, either of today's annual or cumulative emissions since the 1850s. They pale further if they are calculated against per capita consumption of goods and services produced by those emissions, since they are emitted to produce goods that are consumed mostly by the Global North. Thus, water and energy footprints of our consumption lifestyles, and the debate whether they are modest or profligate, will dominate the environmental battles – and legislation – in the years ahead.

The Swedish

water guru Malin Falkenmark has argued that, given the high embedded water footprint of our industrial goods, no country can industrialize that has not got adequate freshwater resources. Nepal and much of South Asia are semi-arid zones that suffer four months of monsoon floods and eight months of practically drought-like conditions with little precipitation and total reliance on groundwater whether pumped or emerging from springs. Water scarcity in Nepal is a reality that is unfortunately much ignored and in a policy blind spot. It requires rethinking water storage away from conventional engineering that will be very different for dissimilar geographic and ecological zones as well as social contexts that prevail in a diverse country like Nepal.



IWMI's Continuum of Water Storage Options

POLITICS

Consensus To Contentions

Despite putting all the eggs in the basket of Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda in the name of consensus, Nepali Congress efforts seem to bring contentions.

By A CORRESPONDENT

Communist leader Vladimir Lenin said, lie as much as possible till you hold power comfortably. He argues that once one holds power, don't let the enemy and rival thrive,

As he is mentally and by heart a true follower of Mao and Lenin, Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal is doing everything to woo his enemies and rivals to firmly control, enemies, as it says by Russian communist revolutionary leader Lenin.

Forming a coalition government with the support and backing of the main communist party CPN-UML, rightist party RPP and Swatantra and regional identity-based Madhesh-based parties, Prachanda betrays political understanding, breaking an alliance with the Nepali Congress, the Communist Party of Nepal (United Socialist) and others.

With the hope of breaking the alliances, the Nepali Congress and CPN-US voted for Prachanda's government, harping on the slogan of political consensus. After his historic victory, securing the highest number of votes, Prachanda also helped the national consensus.

However, Prachanda's

slogan of consensus turned contentious at the election of the speaker of the House of Representatives. Prachanda voted for the CPN-UML candidate as speaker and the Rastriya Swatantra Party candidate as deputy speaker.

"We voted Prachanda hoping that the Prime Minister can

two recent elections, we are losing hope from him," said Ramesh Lekhak, NC Chief Whip Ramesh Lekhak. "Nepali Congress pursues the policy of consensus and the government side is reciprocating it by confrontation."

Frustration is growing against Prime Minister Prachanda's recent actions and reactions.



take initiative to have consensus in the selecting candidates for constitutional posts. Looking at the

"If Prachanda does not realize its mistakes and does not push the agenda of consensus in selecting

the key constitutional positions, Nepal Congress can no longer give safe cushion to Prachanda,” said senior party leader Arjun Narsingh KC said.

But leaders close to Prime Minister Prachanda said they are confident that Prachanda will take a stand when necessary, and he does not have any interest in pushing the Nepali Congress from his antenna. “We know how untrustworthy Oli is and how Nepali Congress helped us in the past to rescue from the ire of CPN-UML leader Oli.

Maoist leader Deb Gurung holds the view that Prime Minister Prachanda is making his best efforts to bring consensus in politics. Prime minister Prachanda is not a puppet of CPN-UML leader Oli and he can take the decision at an appropriate time,” said Gurung.

With Prachanda’s assurances and words, ruling party candidate Deb Prasad Ghimire was able to secure all 167 votes of the coalition and the Nepali Congress candidate secured 100 lawmakers, including those from the Nepali Congress and the CPN (Unified Socialist. “Seven-party ruling alliance partners and some independent lawmakers voted in Ghimire’s favor,” said Gurung.

Communist Unity

As a typical communist leader and die-heart follower of Lenin and Mao, Prachanda does not hesitate to carry several hats, including centrist, rightist and communist.

As he is leading a government completely backed by two rightists and two regional identity-based parties, Prime Minister Prachanda is also making an effort to unite all the communist parties.

During discussions with a team led by the Communist Party of Nepal (Bahumat) – CPN (Bahumat) – at the Office of the Prime Minister, Prachanda said that community unity is necessary.

“The disposition of Nepal’s socialist system has not been enshrined in the Constitution with an ordinary meaning. Discourse is



also going on regarding the socialist way with Nepali characteristics at present. Discussions have started among all communist parties of Nepal on this topic. I expect a constructive role from you,” PM Dahal said.

During the meeting with the Prime Minister, the CPN (Bahumat) leaders presented various requests related to nationality, popular democracy and the livelihood of the people.

“The government is committed to developing a self-sustaining economy by protecting the

national capital. I am alert regarding as to how maximum work can be carried out in the current situation,” he said.

Prachanda’s Consensus

Although he was unable to build consensus, prime minister Prachanda held an all-party meeting and he decided to continue with consensus and cooperation among the political forces in the days ahead.

Communications and In-

formation Technology Minister Rekha Sharma said the PM expects consensus and cooperation on all political issues occurring in the country. “The leaders of political parties have also agreed on this motion,” Minister Sharma said.

PM Pra-

chanda also made it clear that the consensus of the ruling alliance would be implemented regarding the government, and sought ideas and suggestions on whether the political parties can forge consensus for the election to the President, Vice-President. As a die-heart follower of Lenin and Mao, Prime Minister Prachanda’s actions are very much with his communist gurus’ lies as much as possible till he consolidated power.

The Final Six Seconds



BY: HEMANT ARJYAL

It is quite common to have lots of comments, especially unqualified ones, after an air crash. As it is, qualified comments from experts are very rare. Most such comments are usually made by people who have retired after a long flying career. But even those tend to be quite guarded. As such, they rightly refrain from making sweeping judgments. Even journalists, who have a responsibility to provide factual and balanced stories often do so without checking basic facts. This accident was no exception from that angle.

The most glaring one was related to the First Officer (FO). Some portals even reported that out of the two pilots in the cockpit, one was a “trainee pilot”, implying that the aircraft had just one qualified pilot. They did not know that the FO, a Captain in this case, had to be tested if she was qualified enough to be “released” to fly as a “Commander”. It was a watershed moment for her, especially after having lost her husband in a 2006 crash and only thereafter she resolved to take flying as a career.

While some found a problem with the crew opting to land from the west side runway (12) than from the east (30), as ATC had instructed. Again, this too is quite normal as the examining Captain wanted her to land from the west this time. For an aircraft coming from the east, as in this case, a “30” landing becomes a simple “straightinapproach”, with no twists and turns to be made. The Captain would not have put her in that situation if he had the slightest doubt in her capabilities. But sadly it did not happen as he possibly assumed, and it ended up making flight YT-961 as the worst domestic accident ever in Nepal with seventy-two fatalities. We are seeking to get a clear answer as to what exactly happened at the moment

to have sadly ended in a heap of mangled metal in the topographical stretch like the Seti Gorge.

The impromptu video recording, possibly by a normal camera phone wilding individual, will be of immense interest to all interested. Only six, of the eleven seconds, the recording provides how the aircraft wings become almost vertical as it was seen to bank suddenly to the left. The aircraft is seen to be on a normal, left bank in the beginning and it suddenly lurches left as the main fuselage gets hidden behind the building. However, the left wing tip can still be seen almost till the end of the fifth second getting progressively smaller. One has to pause and drag the cursor slowly to watch the recording minutely. One can imagine how close it was to the ground as we hear the dreaded and loud impacting bang on the sixth second or just a second after the wing tip gets fully hidden.

It was a case of devastating stall, no doubt. But what led the aircraft to get

into that situation will only be a matter of conjecture. Further, the aircraft was in landing configuration as required. This means, it was slow, its flaps were extended as were the landing gears. While some felt that the flaps were not deployed to the degree desired That is not all, even the engines will be in low thrust mode while making a landing approach. Flying is all about overcoming the forces of “gravity” by the “lift” generated by the wings and, “drag” overcome by “thrust” provided by the engine. Gravity and Drag are ruthless duos that constantly shadow pilots. You make one mistake and they punish you instantly, especially when one is too close to the ground as in this case.



Reading comments made by numerous knowledgeable people in various media/forums are unanimous about it being a stall. Basing their observation purely on the said clip, some see the aircraft flying far too slow for comfort. Steep banking in such a scenario was the reason for the stall, they reasoned. Some wondered if she was mistakenly approaching the old airport, or might have even passed over the extended line of the new airport alignment that required correcting by steep banking. Aircraft have two pilots for a reason, but in this case, she was under tremendous pressure to do multiple jobs on her own as the examiner pilot was watching her every move. She had to watch out of the window frequently, also watch the speed and the altitude and also keep flying. Landing an

aircraft is always a stressful job, and one can imagine the pressure when you are doing all this alone.

I found comments on BBC by a well-known safety expert, veteran Indian Capt. Amit Singh, <https://twitter.com/flyingamit/status/1615283971549724675> who does not talk about this particular accident parse but looks holistically at the prevailing “safety” culture in Nepal. He talks about various types of safety cultures that need to be followed. And we seem to fare very poorly on all accounts.

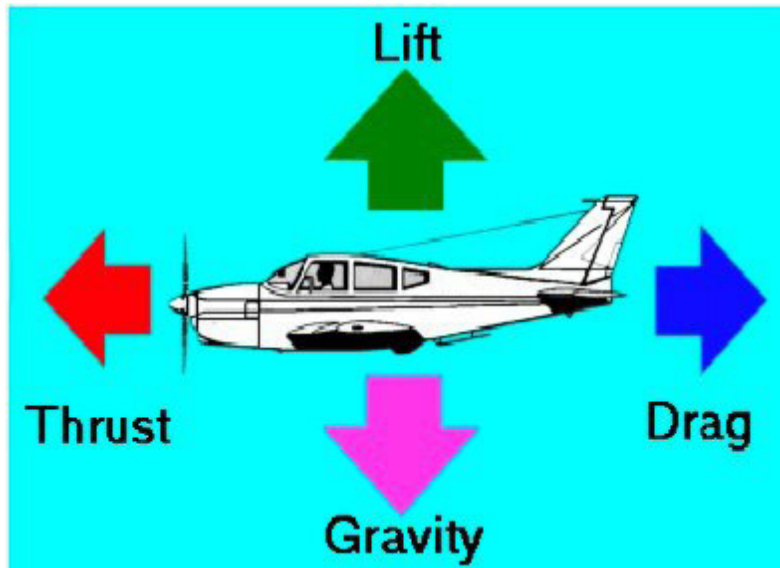
Another devastating article that came up was

<https://twitter.com/blairglencorse/status/1615294703070773248> titled “Sky high corruption caused Nepal’s air disaster” by Blair Gelnorse and Naraya Adhikari in Global governance. He states that the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN) serves as the service provider and regulator for the sector. This system allows the DG of CAAN to issue tenders, put in place regulations & oversee compliance – a clear conflict of interest

among other hard hammering points. They further add the committee was formed to investigate the recent accident but the prospect of any meaningful accountability through this process are being slim as Nepali governments are adept at setting up these bodies that are either mismanaged, under-resourced, ignored – or all three.

Wish that YT961 too had aborted landing much sooner than later on discovering the approach

was not stable enough. I reckon she would still would have earned the commandership as Capt KC would have appreciated her sense of safety in giving up at the right time. It is very sad to see so much suffering for so many and it is equally sad to see FO/Capt. Anju Khatiwada’s dream shattered. All we



can do is to pray for their eternal peace and strength to all the friends and families of the departed to bear through this tragedy.

So long as the political parties keep power grabbing as the only aim of being in the government, we will not have to wait too long to face another disaster of this kind. It is time to be serious and expedite breaking CAAN into two entities, not just as suggested by ICAO or EASA, but as per a commitment made years ago. It will be a marathon job cleaning all sorts of muck therein, much like Hercules had to do to clean Augean stables. Like an aircraft approaching stall, the establishment does not have much time to get all this done to avoid meeting an ignominious fate otherwise. Being busy playing just musical chairs, I am deeply skeptical if they will have time to listen to promote safety culture as has become so very necessary.

Hemant Arjyal can be reached at harjyal@yahoo.com

YETI AIRLINES PLANE CRASH Government's Ritual Response

Instead of responding with ritual actions and populist decisions calling a national holiday, Nepal Government should immediately start to implement Air Worthiness (AD) of all aircraft flying in the domestic sector and strict measures for crew management as well. Although it is yet to know the cause of the accident of Yeti Airlines ATR-600, strict adherence to AD and an effective crew management system can help airlines to improve their efficiency and operational productivity and minimizes errors.

By A CORRESPONDENT

As its ritual response to all plane accidents in the past, the Nepal government announced the formation of the Investigation Commission. As the government is harping populist agenda, it has decided to give a public holiday on Monday to mourn the fatal crash of the 9N-ANC ATR 72.

This was the second tragic air accident of Yeti Airlines in just 8 months. In April, 22 passengers were killed when Tara Air, Yeti Air's subsidiary, crashed in Jomsom.

Accident after accident, the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal forms an investigation committee.

However, the suggestion of the report was rarely published and recommendations given by the committees were put into the dustbin soon after the handing over of the report.

As usual, the report of the recently formed commission will be like in the past. The committee will blame 75 percent for human error and the remaining for technical and management failure. As all the crew members dead there will be no one to defend them, and the remaining technical and management failure issues will be dumped.

Although they are way out to minimize air crashes, no perma-

nent solutions are taken to ensure air safety. At a time when the air operators continue to influence policy making, particularly regulatory bodies, nothing can work.

Media often reports that the head of Civil Aviation Authority Nepal (CAAN) is heavily under the influence of a few big air carriers which can transfer the Director General and other senior officials on their wish. This is the reason Nepal's regulatory authority is regarded as weak and inefficient.

Following a major fatal accident, experts are expecting that the government would come up with



including four crew members were onboard. Those who died in the fatal accident include 53 Nepali, five Indians, four Russians, each Irish, Australian, Argentinean, and France, and two Korean.

Eyewitness Narrations

Resident Bishnu Tiwari, who rushed to the crash site near the Seti River to help search for bodies, said the rescue efforts were hampered by thick smoke and a raging fire. “The flames were so hot that we couldn’t go near the wreckage. I heard a man crying for help, but because of the flames and smoke we couldn’t help him,” Tiwari said. It was not immediately clear what caused the accident. A witness said he saw the aircraft spinning violently in the air after it began landing, watching from the terrace of his house. Finally, Gaurav Gurung said, the plane fell nose-first towards its left and crashed into the gorge. The aviation authority said the aircraft last made contact with the airport from near Seti Gorge at 10:50 a.m. before crashing.

The twin-engine ATR 72 aircraft, operated by Nepal’s Yeti Airlines, was flying from the capital, Kathmandu, to Pokhara, a 27-minute flight.

The aircraft’s fuselage was split into multiple parts that were scattered down the gorge.

Pokhara, located 200 kilo-

stringent measures to improve Nepal’s air safety.

After the accident, an emergency meeting of the Council of Ministers did not make any major decisions toward safety.

In the same cabinet meeting, the government formed a five-member investigation commission to find out the truth and facts about the crash of the Yeti Airlines aircraft in Pokhara this morning.

Constituting a Commission under the convener of Tourism and Civil Aviation Secretary Nagendra Ghimire as convener, the government hopes that the probe commission will identify the causes of the plane accident and submit a report along with suggestions for preventing the occurrence of such accidents in the coming days.

The members of the commission include aviation experts Deepak Prakash Bastola (retired Major General) and Sunil Thapa (retired Captain) and aircraft repair engineer Ekraj Jung Thapa. Joint-Secretary at the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation and Buddhi Sagar Lamichhane is the member-secretary of the commission.

The committee will submit its report in 45 days and the government would make arrangements for

immediately executing the suggestions contained in the report once the commission submits it.

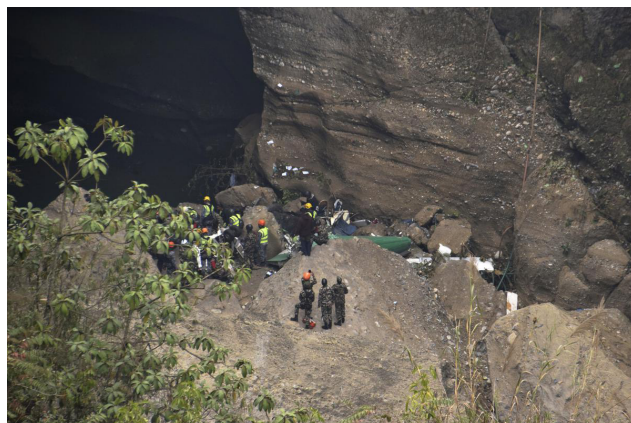
Commission after Commissions

Since the first plane crashed in 1955 in Simara, this is the 104 planes crashed with a total fatality of 916 and what all the governments did is constituting a commission. No one took any steps to implement the report.

Former Director Generals of Civil Aviation Authority Birendra Bahadur Deuja and former DG Ratish Chandra Lal Suman hold the view that the government should implement the recommendations of such probe commissions.

On Saturday (January 15), the plane bound for Pokhara from Kathmandu crash-landed near the airport- in the Seti Gorge and the issue of air safety and airlines is again in the public debate.

The first such dreadful plane accident occurred in domestic aviation in Nepal where seventy-two persons





meters (125 miles) west of Kathmandu, is the gateway to the Annapurna Circuit, a popular hiking trail in the Himalayas. The city's new international airport began operations only two weeks ago.

Safety Record of ATR

The safety record of Yeti Airlines is very poor in Nepal as its sister airline Twin otter crashed in April 2022 killing 23 passengers on board. However, this is the first accident in the ATR type of plane involved.

However, the ATR-72, which has been used by airlines around the world for short regional flights, has several incidents of the deadly accident. Introduced in the late 1980s by a French and Italian partnership, the aircraft model has been involved in several deadly accidents over the years.

In Taiwan, two earlier accidents involving ATR 72-500 and ATR 72-600 aircraft happened just months apart. In July 2014, a Trans Asia ATR 72-500 flight crashed while trying to land on the scenic Penghu archipelago between Taiwan and China, killing 48 people onboard.

An ATR 72-600 operated by the same Taiwanese airline crashed shortly after takeoff in Taipei in Feb-

ruary 2015 after one of its engines failed and the second was shut down, apparently by mistake.

The 2015 crash, captured in dramatic footage that showed the plane striking a taxi as it hurtled out of control, killed 43, and prompted authorities to ground all Taiwanese-registered ATR 72s for some time.

Tanzania ceased all flights in 2016 and later went out of business. ATR identified the plane involved in Sunday's crash as an ATR 72-500 in a tweet. According to plane tracking data from flightradar24.com, the aircraft was 15 years

old and "equipped with an old transponder with unreliable data."

It was previously flown by India's Kingfisher Airlines and Thailand's Nok Air before Yeti took it over in 2019, according to records on Airfleets.net. Yeti Airlines has a fleet of six ATR72-500 planes, company spokesperson Sudarshan Bar-taula said.

Sunday's crash is Nepal's deadliest since 1992 when all 167 people aboard a Pakistan International Airlines plane were killed when it plowed into a hill as it tried to land in Kathmandu.

The latest crash of a domestic aircraft justifies the European Union's decision to ban airlines from Nepal from flying into the 27-nation bloc since 2013. European Union cites weak safety standards. Although the International Civil Aviation Organization cited improvements in Nepal's aviation sector, the EU continues to demand administrative reforms.

However, the government is yet to be ready to table the bill which is in the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation. After the latest fatal accident, the pressure is now on the government.



NRB'S DECISION

Surrounding Controversy

The decision of Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) to amend the Working Capital Loan Guidelines, 2022' raised the many questions

By A CORRESPONDENT

Although a group of businessmen who were defaulting to pay loans from commercial banks welcomed the amendment as the right step, economists question the rationale of the amendment. They termed the amendment as politically motivated and taken to protect the defaulters.

Among many, the RPP leader and renowned economist Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani were the first to question the rationality of the amendment. Dr. Lohani questioned the recent Nepal Rastra Bank decision: is Encouraging the Misuse of Borrowed Money a "Progressive" Policy of the Finance Minister? "

Dr. Lohani's question has valid point. After meeting with Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda and Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Bishnu Poudel, Governor of Nepal Rastra Bank Maha Prasad Adhikari amended 'Working Capital Loan Guidelines, 2022' to provide benefits to the businessman.

Despite the pressure from the government, he avoided deciding in the past. Following the change of government, governor Adhikari has shown flexibility and

amended the regulation.

The decision of Governor Adhikari, who took a stand against any flexibility, to amend the guidelines raised many questions. A senior leader of the Rashtriya Prajatantra Party Dr. Lohani raised the question of the decision.

"It was seen that the Rashtra Bank has introduced a policy

obtained the loans above the limits set by the central bank, to clear such loans in two-and-a-half years.

Now the creditors can clear the loan by mid-July 2025, repaying it in an installment of various sizes. The installments to repay the limit-exceeding working capital loans are 10 percent by mid-July 2023, 20 percent by mid-January 2024, 20 percent by mid-July 2024, 20 percent by mid-January 2025 and 30 percent by mid-July 2025.

No businesses can demand or get working capital loans beyond the limit set by the NRB and this leverage is provided to the

creditors who had a portfolio larger than the prescribed size before the implementation of the guidelines in mid-October.

As per the guidelines, a firm with an estimated annual transaction of up to Rs. 20 million will get a loan of up to 20 percent of its annual turnover. However, it can obtain up to 40 percent of the annual turnover amount in special cases. The new provisions have clauses whereby the businesses seeking a such loan should submit the audit reports of the past five years and it should be utilized for commercial purposes.



of giving concessions even when the businessmen are doing the opposite of what they have borrowed for. Is encouraging the misuse of borrowed money to be business-friendly a "progressive" policy of the Finance Minister and the Rashtra Bank?" tweeted Dr. Lohani, former finance minister and an economist.

After the meeting with PM Prachanda and Finance minister Paudel, the Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) has amended the 'Working Capital Loan Guidelines, 2022' implemented in October last year allowing the creditors, who have

ECONOMY

The central bank has also informed us that the duration, repayment schedule and installment amount cannot be changed.

Likewise, according to the amended provisions, if any entrepreneur wanted to repay the term loan for working capital purposes, the banks and financial institutions (BFIs) cannot levy any prepayment charges. However, this provision doesn't apply in case of credit purchase or takeover, or transfer of such loans.

Private sector entrepreneurs, including their organizations like the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNC-CI), Confederation of Nepalese Industry (CNI), Nepal Chamber of Commerce (NCC), commodity business associations and regional chambers had been demanding the repeal of postponement of the guidelines since its implementation more than two-and-a-half months ago.

However, the central bank had been refusing to listen to their demands maintaining that the new guidelines were introduced to check the misuse of loans in unproductive sectors. Governor of the NRB, Maha Prasad Adhikari had said in September 2022 after the amendment of the guidelines a month earlier that there had been over-financing in the name of banking capital and the central

bank wanted to make sure that the loan was utilized for commercial purposes.

The NRB had also said that the business persons maintaining transparency in business and utilizing the loans for the stated purpose, and ex-CEOs of the BFIs had welcomed the move.

Meanwhile, the central bank had found a middle way of extending the repayment period up to two-and-a-half years without scrapping or postponing the implementation of the new guidelines.



NRB raises loan size

However, the central bank has raised the limit of the loan size that is not covered by the provisions of the guidelines to Rs. 10 million, which was set at Rs. 5 million earlier. Likewise, the banks can mobilize loans for a 3-10 years period for permanent working capital. The period was five years earlier.

The guidelines have given the responsibility to the banks for the surprise inspection of working

capital and liabilities. However, in the case of working capital of up to Rs. 50 million, a quarterly report authenticated by the customer would be valid. Before the amendment, the customers had to submit their monthly reports.

For loans above Rs. 50 million, the customer should submit a half-yearly report approved by the respective company's internal auditor.

PM talks with FM, Governor

Earlier, Prime Minister Puspa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' had discussed the contemporary economic issues and problems in the banking and business sector with Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Bishnu Poudel and Governor Adhikari.

D P M Poudel and Governor Adhikari had reached Prime Minister's official residence

Baluwatar to meet the PM, according to the Prime Minister's secretariat. During the discussion, Prime Minister Prachanda expressed his concern over the recent problems and challenges in the banking sector and read a statement issued by the secretariat.

PM Dahal stressed the need to reduce the interest rate and improve the monetary policy regarding liquidity problems and also to take other necessary initiatives.

“Due to the challenges in the country’s economy, it is necessary to find ways to minimize its impact on the people stop the flow of loans to the unproductive areas and makes people well informed and aware of the country’s economic status,” he said.

The Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) has amended the ‘Working Capital Loan Guidelines, 2022’ implemented in October last year allowing the creditors, who have obtained loans above the limits set by the central bank, to clear such loans in two-and-a-half years.

Now the creditors can clear the loan by mid-July 2025, repaying it in an installment of various sizes. The installments to repay the limit-exceeding working capital loans are 10 percent by mid-July 2023, 20 percent by mid-January 2024, 20 percent by mid-July 2024, 20 percent by mid-January 2025 and 30 percent by mid-July 2025.

No businesses can demand or get working capital loans beyond the limit set by the NRB and this leverage is provided to the creditors who had a portfolio larger than the prescribed size before the implementation of the guidelines in mid-October.

As per the guidelines, a firm with an estimated annual transaction of up to Rs. 20 million will get a loan of up to 20 percent of its annual turnover. However, it can obtain up to 40 percent of the annual turnover amount in special cases. The new provisions have clauses whereby the businesses seeking a such loan should submit

the audit reports of the past five years and it should be utilized for commercial purposes.

The central bank has also informed us that the duration, repayment schedule and installment amount cannot be changed.

Likewise, according to the amended provisions, if any entrepreneur wanted to repay the term loan for working capital purposes, the banks and financial institutions (BFIs) cannot levy any prepayment charges. However, this provision doesn’t apply in case of credit purchase or takeover, or transfer of such loans.

NRB addresses the private sector’s demand



Private sector entrepreneurs, including their organizations like the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI), Confederation of Nepalese Industry (CNI), Nepal Chamber of Commerce (NCC), commodity business associations and regional chambers had been demanding the repeal of postponement of the guidelines since its implementation more than two-and-a-half months ago.

However, the central bank had been refusing to listen to their

demands maintaining that the new guidelines were introduced to check the misuse of loans in unproductive sectors. Governor of the NRB, Maha Prasad Adhikari had said in September 2022 after the amendment of the guidelines a month earlier that there had been over-financing in the name of banking capital and the central bank wanted to make sure that the loan was utilized for commercial purposes.

The NRB had also said that the business persons maintaining transparency in business and utilizing the loans for the stated purpose, and ex-CEOs of the BFIs had welcomed the move.

According to the bank’s sources, the central bank had found a middle way of extending the repayment period up to two-and-a-half years without scrapping or postponing the implementation of the new guidelines.

DPM Poudel said that it is necessary to create harmony between the fiscal policy of the government and

the monetary policy of the central bank. “There should be a lively relationship between the Ministry of Finance and NRB, and no interventions,” he said while listening to the departmental presentations at the ministry.

Whatever the reason behind the amendment, the decision will likely protect the businessmen who took the loan from the bank for one purpose and used it for another purpose. “This will support those who are misusing the depositor’s money.

PRITHVI BAHADUR PANDE

Unifying The Bank

With his broad vision, depth perspective and clear mission, Prithvi Bahadur Pande launched a joint operation of Nepal Investment Mega Bank Ltd (NIMBL), a bank named after the merger of Nepal Investment Bank Ltd and Mega Bank Ltd. Led by Pande, an experienced, reputed and highly respected banker, the newly merged NIMBL aims to expand banking services throughout Nepal to reach all populations, both urban and rural.

By Keshab Poudel

Coincidentally, on the occasion of 301st Prithvi Jayanti and National Unity Day, Prithvi Bahadur Pande, with the same name as the founder of Nepal, inaugurated the joint business of Nepal Investment Bank and Mega Bank, named Nepal Investment Mega Bank (NIMBL), at Hotel Aloft in Thamel. As Prithvi Naryan Shah unified Nepal as a nation to strengthen small states, Pande goal is to unify and strengthen Nepal's banking and financial system.

As it says a healthy banking system is one of the vital parts of a nation's foundation, the choosing the day for finalization of merge is

meaningful.

Pande, who is the chairperson of Nepal Investment Mega Bank Ltd, has a strong connection to the national unification process through his family. His family members have made significant sacrifices and contributions to the movement launched by Prithvi Narayan Shah.

As the government observed Prithvi Jayanti, a day to pay respect to the legendary King Prithvi Narayan Shah and those associated with him, and to strengthen national unity, Chairman Pande chose the same day to launch the unification of the bank. He expressed his commitment to strengthen-

ing the country's economy and banking sector through this merge.

It is natural for a person like Prithvi Bahadur Pande, the son of a respected civil servant and diplomat Bhim Bahadur Pande, a close family member of late Kaji Kalu Pande, the commander-in-chief and prime minister of King Prithvi Narayan Shah, and Kazi Damodar Pande, a patriotic Prime Minister and commander who led the Gorkha battalion to expand Nepalese territory in the east up to Sikkim, to make such commitments to the country. His family's history and connection to the national unification pro-



cess and strengthening of the country's economy and banking sector is evident.

As an experienced and respected banker, Pande has a long career in the banking sector starting from Nepal Rastra Bank, General Manager at Rashtriya Banijya Bank, founder chief executive officer of Himalayan Bank Ltd, and Nepal Investment Bank. As the newly elected Chairman of NIMBL, he addressed a large media gathering, outlining his clear thought and vision for Nepal's banking sector in relation to the regional situation and ongoing global economic situation. He justified the merger of Nepal Investment Bank and Mega Bank by explaining the need for change in the context of banking transactions.

Pande, known for regularly contributing to heritage conservation and preservation efforts in Kathmandu Valley, described the future scenario of the banking sector in Ne-

pal and defended the decision of Nepal Rastra Bank's policy of merger as the right decision at the right time. He holds the view that Nepal does not need more commercial banks.

In his inaugural speech at the opening of the joint operation, chairperson Pande, with his humble and realistic words, highlighted the strength and weaknesses of both the bank and the area where they can synergy.

He said that Mega Bank's larger branches and reach to traders and entrepreneurs is added advantage to NIBL. Similarly, NIBL's over 36 years long experience and established reputation and credibility in the banking sector and banking transactions in the country and abroad is unique.

"With our experiences of both the banks, we can provide high quality and professional banking services throughout the country," said Pande.

He said that everybody wishes to be number one and NIMBL is also no exception. After the merger, we are no 1 in some areas and 2 and 3 in others. The vision of the bank will be to remain in the top 3 in the banking sector.

"Today is the new day for the employees of the banks. They have to work in a different scenario and circumstances," said Pande. Addressing the press meeting, the newly elected chair of NIMBL Pande said that the merger with the Mega Bank will open new investment opportunities.

Chairman Pande also thanked Nepal Rastra Bank for taking a bold decision encouraging banks to merge. "This is the need of the hour to further strengthen the financial sector."

"The bank is now the no 1 in He said that everybody wishes to be number one and NIMBL is also no exception. After the merger, we are no 1 in some areas and 2 and 3 in



others. The vision of the bank will be to remain in the top 3 in the banking sector.

“The bank is now the no 1 in some sectors and no 2 in others. We will aim to remain in the top 3,” declared chair Pande. He said that Nepal needs to go for another round of mergers to shorten the number of banks saying Nepal to limit the number of commercial banks to 7.

some sectors and no 2 in others. We will aim to remain in the top 3,” declared chairman Pande. He said that Nepal needs to go for another round of mergers to shorten the number of banks saying Nepal to limit the number of commercial banks to 7. In this sense, the day chosen for the inauguration of the integrated bank is most appropriate. ‘After the merger, NIMB has now 296 branches, 59 Exten-

sion Counters, 109 Branchless banking services and 279 ATM.

Merger Agreement

NRB Gives Final Approval To Merger Of Nepal Investment Bank & Mega Bank | To Commence Joint Operation From Poush 27 January 2, 2023

Both these banks had agreed to merge on May 27th. It has been agreed that the merger swap ratio of Investment Bank and Mega Bank will be 100:90. This means Mega Bank will get 90 shares equal to 100 shares of Nepal Investment Bank. The National Bank had also given in-principle approval to these two banks for the merger on June 22, 2022.

The MoU for the merger was signed by Prithvi Bahadur Pande, Chairman of Nepal Investment Bank Limited and Bhoj Bahadur Shah, Chairman

of Mega Bank Nepal Limited.

After the merger of the two banks, Pande is chairman and Jyoti Prakash Pandey is the chief executive officer.

As of Ashad’s end of 2079 BS, Nepal Investment Bank Limited has a paid-up capital of Rs. 18.31 billion while Mega Bank Limited has a paid-up capital of Rs. 16.12 billion. Likewise, the reserve and fund of Nepal Investment Bank Ltd. are Rs. 14.82 billion and Mega Bank Nepal Limited has a reserve of Rs. 5.92 billion. The swap ratio for the merger has been agreed at 100:90. This means that every hundred shares of Mega Bank will convert into 90 shares of the new bank formed after the merger.

Similarly, NIBL has a loan portfolio of Rs. 173.46 billion and MEGA has loans of Rs. 150.46 billion. On the oth-

er hand, the deposit collection of NIBL stood at Rs. 182.01 billion while Mega Bank Nepal Limited has a total deposit collection of Rs. 152.08 billion.

The integrated business of Nepal Investment Bank and Mega Bank is taking place on the 27th of Push. The central office and branch office of both banks will be closed for two days on the 25th and 26th of February for data migration and other purposes while the integrated business is being started.

As per the deadline set by the Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB), the banks have the time till January 6, 2023, to go for the merger.

According to the merger committee member and Mega Bank Board of Directors member Gopal Khanal, they plan to merge and launch integrated transactions within the deadline given by the central bank.

N I B L ' s paid-up capital is Rs 18.31 billion whereas Mega's is Rs 16.2 billion.

Merger Pace

In the last two weeks, six banks have already merged. After the Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) took a 'pressure policy' for the commercial banks to merge, the latter have gone/ are going into mergers. Glob-

al IME Bank and Bank of Kathmandu merged and the integrated business started on Sunday.

More than half a dozen other commercial banks are merging this week. According to the policy put forward by the central bank, there has been a wave of mergers between big commercial banks.

At one time, the number of commercial banks in Nepal had reached 32. After the NRB asked the banks to

banks. "A merger reduces the cost of financial intermediation. It helps to create a strong and capable organization," he said. He said that banks with large capital are also needed to increase investment in large projects.

According to international practice, the central bank has been encouraging mergers to create competitive and investment-capable banks.

In his address chairperson Pande said that Due



increase their paid-up capital, the number of commercial banks decreased to 27. After the recent and upcoming mergers, the number of commercial banks is likely to drop to 18.

Maha Prasad Adhikari, governor of NRB, said that by increasing the size of the capital, mergers were encouraged to create strong and capable

to the large number of banks in contrast to the size of the population and economy of the country, a merge is the best option. "Mergers of banks and financial institutions have increased their paid-up capitals. This also has increased risk management capabilities along with capital growth. Management costs are reduced



as well,” said Pande.

In the financial sector, this week is seen to be the week of bank mergers. Prabhu Bank Limited and Century Commercial Bank Limited merged and started an integrated business. Similarly, Himalayan and Civil Bank have also called for a general meeting for a merger between the two banks.

Similarly, a preliminary agreement has been signed between Laksmi Bank and Sunrise Bank for a merger. Kumari and Nepal Credit and Commerce (NCC) Bank are also merging.

Some banks have merged and some are in the process of merger. NRB has requested Sanima Bank and Machhapuchhre Bank to go for a merger and is encouraging Siddhartha, Prime, Citi-

zens and Everest, etc. to go for a merger as well.

Chairperson Pande said that depending on the size of Nepal’s economy, 6 to 7 commercial banks would be enough for the country. He said that after the completion of the first phase, there will be a second phase of the merger.

In Nepal, there were 2 in 1980, 5 in 1990, 13 in 2000, and 27 in 2010. There were 32 commercial banks in Nepal in 2012. The number of banks has started to decrease since 2020. In the last two and a half years of that period, 10 have decreased. Since then, the number of banks has started to decrease.

The merger of commercial banks is currently in full swing and the message given by Chairman Pande on the day of the joint business launch of

NIMBL is historically significant.

His choice of this day to launch the merger and his commitment to strengthening the country’s economy and banking sector, is a powerful message as the country observes Prithvi Jayanti, a day dedicated to the legendary King Prithvi Narayan Shah and those associated with him, and to strengthen national unity.

As it says pick a leader who will keep jobs in your country by offering companies incentives to hire qualified and competent. Pick a leader who has intellectualism and wisdom, not ignorance, stability, not fear. Pande has shown in his banking career what is required.

Towards Climate Resilient Water Resources



BY: BATU UPRETY

Several countries are experiencing water shortage to meet their requirements for drinking, irrigation, energy generation, industrial production and for water-dependent other sectors such as waste management, tourism and urban development. Water is a critical resource to meet existing demands, and is a major 'risk' to accelerate water-induced disasters. Although Nepal has plenty of water in river systems, lakes, reservoirs, and wetlands, number of urban areas and settlements face difficulties in meeting drinking water demands, and agriculture production still depends on monsoon. Nepal experiences 'too much water' during the rainy season, and 'too little water and drought' during the dry months.

In recent years, water resource is adversely affected from temperature rise uneven precipitation. In addition to other climate-induced disasters, hills and mountains experience landslides, and terai is severely impacted by floods and sedimentation. Nepal is highly climate vulnerable, and is in high climate risk. Key climate impacts are related to reduced water availability, altered spatial-temporal distribution, and change in hydrological cycle. Water availability has increased from snow melting for short period, indicating long-term impacts on hydro-electricity generation, irrigation, drinking water supply and recreational facilities. Climate change has accelerated snow melting, increased formation of new glacial lakes, and expanded existing glacier lakes, posing additional threats of GLOFs.

It is reported that electricity generation has declined by 6.9% in 2020/21 as compared to 2019/20 due to reduction in rainfall, water holding capacity and effect on river discharge. Furthermore, river flows in dry season will be insufficient to operate run-of-the-river hydroelectricity projects, irrigate crop lands and provide recreational facilities. Decrease in energy supply will have multifold

impacts on social and economic sectors. Based on 2014 study, economic cost of climate change on hydroelectricity generation will reach up to 0.3% of GDP/year in extremely dry seasons. In recent years, climate-induced disasters have claimed lives and property. This evidence urges making 'water-smart' climate policy and 'climate-smart' water policy so as to reduce climate change impacts and ensure sustained use of water resources.

Over a decade of experience in implementing adaptation projects as prioritised in the National Adaptation Program of Action, water has a pivotal role in mitigating several climate impacts, as water contributes to reduce carbon emissions, generate renewable energy, and sequester carbon. However, 'water-centred' adaptation programs are yet to implement in Nepal, document and share experiences and learning.

Under the leadership of Water and Energy Commission Secretariat and support from Global Water Partnership hosted by Jalsrot Vikas Sanstha (JVS) in Nepal, Global Water Leadership program is initiated to strengthen collaboration in water resources and WASH governance, utilize evidence and norms to inform climate-resilient water policies, and develop actions- and cost-based response strategy to address prioritised barriers. Under this program, multi-stakeholder consultation process has prioritised three key barriers namely policy implementation, institutional coordination, and data & capacity building. Three working groups are engaged in developing barriers-based strategies.

To better understand linkages between water resources and climate change, Alliance for Global Water Adaptation, and Adaptation Action Coalition with other partners and support from UKaid initiated Water Tracker tool to self-assess and enhance water resilience in national climate planning. Ap-

ENVIRONMENT

plication of this tool in 14 climate change and water resources policies and plans in Nepal informs, inter alia, that: (a) water is considered as risk in many policies & plans and a sector & resource in a few policies; (ii) adaptation actions are prioritized for implementation in reviewed policies and plans; (iii) water requirements for mitigation targets & adaptation goals and water requirements & allocations for water-dependent sectors are not recognized; (iv) policies and plans mention the need for bilateral & multilateral supports for their implementation but do not consider accessing climate finance. Furthermore, climate change policies do not realize the critical role of water in meeting water requirements of social and economic sectors; and water sector plans do not consider additional avenues for accessing climate finance.

Nepal has formulated number of policies and plans both in climate and water resources sector and has estimated billions of US Dollars for their implementation. To name of few, Climate Change Policy (2019), Nationally Determined

Contribution (NDC, 2020), National Adaptation Plan (NAP, 2021-2050), long-term Strategy for Net Zero Emission (2021), Water Resources Policy (2020) and Irrigation Master Plan (2019) etc. provide multiple opportunities to implement adaptation and mitigation options and make the social and economic sectors climate resilient. However, they require multi-billion US Dollars for implementation. The NDC Implementation Plan alone has estimated over US\$ 36 billion, while NAP estimates over US\$ 26 billion. Similarly, implementation of long-term Strategy for Net Zero Emission estimates over US\$ 133 billion to implement existing measures and US\$ 196 billion for additional measures for 2021-2050 period. This estimation urges explor-

ing and access all funding opportunities to meet our national and international commitments.

Let us assume that Nepal received substantial financial resources to implement adaptation and mitigation actions, question arises on our country capacity and willingness to design appropriate plans and programs to reduce climate vulnerability and build adaptive capacity, reduce GHGs emissions,

and commitment to effectively implement actions or facilitate implementation. Current practices of channelling activities and resources without provisions for necessary capacity building has also derailed to achieve the



desired outcomes. Self-interpretation prevails, as activities are normally not designed for enhancing common understanding. In addition, availability of appropriate technologies and skills to use them are crucial for the success of designed activities. To improve performance, necessary training would be required before the project implementation. Although government works on process, it may wish to build capacity, utilize trained manpower, develop willingness, clarify responsibilities and provide incentives, ensure application of appropriate technologies, and provide adequate funding along with capacity enhancing, and monitoring & evaluation provisions. As Nepal's GHGs emission is below 0.06 % of the global emission, enhancing climate adaptation and resilience would contribute to reduce climate vulnerabilities and risks.

IWMI'S NEXUS GAINS

Solar Lift Irrigation

Supported by International Water Management Institute (IWMI), a study shows that Solar Lift Irrigation (SLI), a simple technology and renewable energy source, can increase food production while lowering harmful emissions and aiding in climate change adaptation.

By A CORRESPONDENT

Promoting solar lift irrigation in Nepal's mid-hills, which is clean, gender-friendly, and simple to operate, can be a game-changer to increase agriculture production while reducing the fossil fuel consumption of lift irrigation.

As the study supported by IWMI shows that this is because the nexus of water, land, energy, forest, and bio-diversity is interconnected and essential to food and nutrition security as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation.

For the security of food and nutrition, economic growth, and rural life, it is essential to comprehend the Water, Energy, Food, and Ecosystems (WEFN) problems. They are closely related, according to studies.

Connecting a sizable number of SLRs to the national grid at a time when Nepal's electricity is heavily dependent on hydropower will also significantly support the mixed energy industry and ultimately help to reduce the use of fossil fuel.

The Solar Lift Irrigation Study was carried out by MinErgy, a pioneering private sector research

organization specializing in renewable energy, as part of a package program for the International Water Management Institute (IWMI). Its objectives were to provide a thorough assessment for the stocktaking of solar lift irrigation projects in Ne-

pal and explore the opportunities for grid connection of the schemes.

Similar to this, a deep tube well research in the Terai region aims to investigate the viability of creating Solar Irrigation Pump (SIP) prototype projects with various busi-





ness models for water management and distribution.

The workshop, which included representatives from a range of government agencies, businesses, financial institutions, and NGOs, also aimed to close the gap between research and policy in the area of solar irrigation.

The Nexus Gains initiative Work Package 3 Dissemination Workshop was formally launched by Dr. Manohara Khadka, the national representative, and her colleagues. She emphasizes the value of the WEFE nexus in linking systems, sustaining rural livelihoods, and creating synergies.

Dr. Khadka asserted that the intersection of gender-based policy and technology can be beneficial. She has been a prominent advocate for technology that is friendly to women.

Workshop for dissemination of the Nexus Gains Initiative's Work Package 3's findings on solar lift irrigation and the viability of community-based water business models for polarizing deep tube wells that are already in operation.

"We are thrilled to let you know that our 2021 Annual Report is now available. All areas of international development and environmental science can be connected through water," Dr. Khadka remarked. "We are also conducting research to com-

prehend the federal, provincial, and local watersheds and to boost water utilization to increase food production without affecting the climate."

Dr. Khadka said that water, land, energy, forests, and bio-diversity are highly interconnected systems that are critical to food and nutrition security, livelihoods, climate change adaptation and mitigation and environmental health as well.

In her statement, she said that climate change and other anthropogenic activities will increase the pressure on water, land, energy, forest and biodiversity resources and hinder the health limits to achieve safer energy and food security. She said that the study provides a comprehensive assessment of the stock-taking of the SLI project in Nepal from technical, institutional, financial and governance dimensions and explored the possibilities for grid connection of the schemes.

Shisher Shrestha, the National researcher at IWMI, gave an overview of the research conducted under Nexus Gains WP3. He highlighted the need to scale up Solar Irrigation through a sustainable business model.

Discussions and Presentations

Suyesh Prajapati, Program Director of MinErgy, provided a project overview and methodology of the study. He said that the study focuses on the challenges, viability and contribution of SLI in the rural

life of mid-hills. "We have made a study of 39 districts based on secondary data. We have adequate information on SLI," said Pajapati.

According to him, the study's main emphasis is on the difficulties, viability, and contribution of SLI to rural life in the mid-hills. "On the basis of secondary data, we conducted a study of 39 districts. We have sufficient knowledge about SLI," said Pajapati remarked.

According to Prajapati, there exist databases on 317 different varieties of SLI and a lot of work has already been done in the field. However, there is no information about the number of heads or the sizes of the service delicacies. According to him, 176 SLIs were studies with 2kW or more and less than.

Prajapati said that a lot of work has already been completed in SLI and there are databases on 317 various types of SLI. However, no information is available regarding the number of heads and service delicacy sizes. He said that 176 SLIs were studies with below 2kW and over.

We conducted a case study of 7 systems, with 3 functional and 4 non-functional, in the Surkhet district of Karnali Province. He said that in some cases there is no basic information about the user committees. All three governments, federal, provincial and local are promoting the SLI. Local levels are dedicating a substantial amount of money to SLI and local-level governments want many more.

Ritavrat Joshi, senior program officer of MinErgy presented the study finds in the workshop. He said that only 30 percent of energy is currently used by SLIs and 70 percent is wasted. Through the development of a net metering system, this 70 percent of energy can be used. He said that 70 percent of the SLI are operating and 30 percent are out of

operation due to technical error.

He said that the study team discussed 6 systems out of 7 seven. He said that the majority of non-functional SLI is in hilly areas. The three SLI-provided Bheri Babai Diversion Multipurpose Projects in the Bheri Ganga Municipality of Surkhet successfully operated benefiting 200 households. The user committee is successfully operating charging the tariff for the use of water and the annual maintenance charge.

Binita Shrestha, project coordinator of MinErgy presented the case study findings. Shrestha said that one of the challenges is the lack of technicians for the maintenance of the pump set. She said that farmers have to travel up to Nepalgunj for the maintenance of the pump set and this is costly as well.

She said that all SLI is not functioning well. However, those SLIs, which are functioning, have immensely contributed to enhancing the enhancement of people by increasing production.

She also said that the SLIs are also reducing the import of diesel and helping women not to travel to urban centers to bring diesel to operate the pump set.

In her policy brief presentation, Usha Maskey Manandhar of MinErgy briefed about the policies related to SLIs. She said that in the context of NDC's commitment and SDGs, the use of SLI is important to reduce emissions.

She also discussed the barriers and opportunities under the policy regimes. Furthermore, she discussed in detail the subsidy policy under Renewable Energy Subsidy Policy, and the irrigation policy. In her presentation, Maskey Manandhar also talks about uniformity in policy provisions and communication and marketing of policy provisions.

As the irrigated command areas have access to the local mar-

ket, farmers are making the money by producing and selling the vegetables. However, local

people destroyed an SLI plant in the area as it was sent by the project without people's consent.

Second Session

Under the theme of Technical Sessions II, the theme was a Feasibility Study of Community-based Water Entrepreneurship Business Models for Solarizing existing deep tube wells, expert presented their views.

Prasis Poudel, MD, Aastha Engineering discussed the project overview and methodology. He also presented a case study of findings on the technical aspect.

During the session, Sudhird Chapagain, an agro-economist, presented the agriculture value chain of SLIs. Similarly, Premuka Rai, a GESI expert, presented case study findings on GESI.

The studies provide a comprehensive assessment of stocktaking of solar lift irrigation projects currently undergoing in Nepal from technical, institutional, financial and governance dimensions. Exploring the potential for the grid connection of the schemes, the study also highlighted the benefits and use of over 70 percent of energy to generate additional benefits to the community and contributions to the national power mix.

Studies have shown that the water, energy and food security nex-



us is related to water security, energy security and food security. The study has also shown that they are very much linked to one another, meaning that the actions in any one particular area often can have effects in one or both of the other areas.

Although the study is a small one, it shows how water, energy and food security nexus) are necessary for the benefit of human well-being, poverty reduction and sustainable development.

In fact, agriculture is the largest user of freshwater making it responsible for 70% of total global withdrawal, while more than one fourth of energy used worldwide is an input for food production, distribution, and use. Similarly, food production and supply chain simultaneously utilize approximately 30% of the total energy that is used globally. In this regard, the recent study conducted with the support from IWMI will contribute to Nepal to decide the future policy on SLIs.

MD KULMAN GHISING

Leakage To Single Digit

As he promised eighteen months ago, MD Ghising reduces power leakage to 7.49 percent in five months

By A CORRESPONDENT

When he assumed his second tenure as MD of Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), Kul Man Ghising announced that his effort would be to reduce the electric leakage from over 18 percent

sumption increased in the industrial sector, meter reading was made effective, and the leakages were reduced,” said MD Ghising.

Among the distribution centers under the authority’s seven regional offices and two provincial divi-

Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) has said that it was able to reduce electricity leakage in its distribution system by 1.74 percentage points in the five months of the ongoing fiscal year to 7.49 percent.

Electricity leakage towards distribution was 9.23 percent in the corresponding period of the last fiscal year whereas it stood at 10.86 percent for the entire fiscal year 2021-22.

NEA had earlier set a target of reducing electricity leakage to 14 percent in its supply system and limiting the distribution leakage to 8.5 percent in the current fiscal.

When Ghising joined MD in the first tenure, NEA’s electricity loss was around 25 percent with a huge financial loss. In his first four years of tenure, MD Ghising was able to bring it down to 14 percent.

However, in the two years, his predecessor Hitendra Man Shakya pushed the leakage to around 20 percent again.

According to NEA, out of the 4.14 billion units of electricity received in the distribution system, 3.83 billion units were distributed. Meanwhile, 310 million units of electricity were leaked.

The leakage towards the transmission line was 4.56 percent and the electricity leakage of the overall system was 12.05 percent during the five months of the current fiscal year. The overall leakage in the NEA system had been brought down to 15.38 percent in the last fiscal year.

Since Kulman Ghising was appointed to the top post of the country’s only power utility company, NEA has started taking strict action against



that time to single digit.

Although his critics termed his announcement as a populist stunt, he has materialized what he declared in his second tenure reducing the system loss to 7.4 percent, the lowest in the history of NEA saving millions of Rupees.

The entire team has been mobilized to effectively implement the measures to control technical and non-technical leakages. During this period, construction of new substations was completed, existing substations were upgraded, electricity con-

sion offices, Jabalpur Regional Office in Madhesh Province had the highest electricity leakage.

NEA’s Announcement.

How a coincidence, the announcement came just a day after new Deputy Prime Minister and young RPP leader Rajendra Lingden assumed the power with many commitments in the energy sector.

With a dedicated and highly professional person like MD Ghising in his team, DPM Lingden will have an easy time pursuing his vision and his party.

electricity theft and has become more stringent in collecting dues. Moreover, NEA has installed high-capacity transformers, and upgraded the transmission and distribution systems and substations to reduce electricity leakage.

Ghising, managing director of the authority, said that it was a great achievement to reduce the distribution leakage to 7.49 percent from around 22 percent about seven years ago.

The total electricity leakage of 23 distribution centers under the Janakpur Regional Office was 12.80 percent till the month of mid-November to mid-December. In the same period last year, it was 12.97 percent. Malangwa Distribution Centre in Sarlahi had the highest power leakage of 44.83 percent. Last year, the distribution center's electricity leakage was 43.82 percent.

The electricity leakage of Rautahat's Maulapur Distribution Centre was 40.55 percent. It was 37.82 percent at Simraungadh Distribution Centre in Bara during the review period. The leakage of Mahottari's Jaleswar Distribution Centre was 37.61 percent last year and 34.51 percent this year.

The overall electricity leakage of 24 distribution centers under Biratnagar Regional Office in Province 1 during the review period was 7.42 percent against leakage of 9.94 percent during the same period last year. The

overall power leakage of six distribution centers under Hetauda Provincial Division Office in Bagmati Province was four percent in the five months of the current fiscal year, compared to 4.53 percent during the same period last fiscal.

Palung Distribution Centre of Makwanpur had the highest power leakage of 24.64 percent under the division office. The overall electricity leakage of 20 distribution centers under the Kathmandu Regional Office in Bagmati Province was 5.33 percent. In the previous year, it was 7.47 percent. Sindhupalchowk Distribution Centre under the Kathmandu Regional Office had the highest leakage of 21.37 percent, which was still an improvement from 31.93 percent in the same period last fiscal.

The overall electricity leakage of 12 distribution centers under the Pokhara Regional Office in Gandaki Province was 7.91 percent in the five months of last fiscal and was brought down to 6.43 percent this

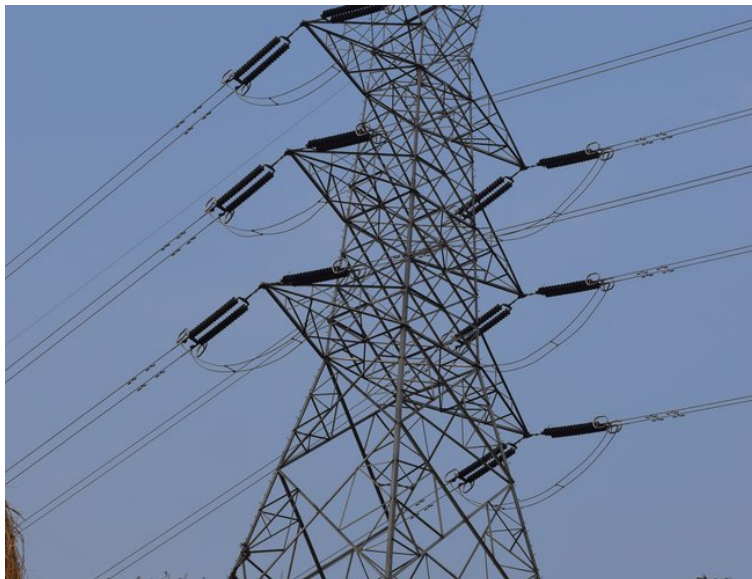


fiscal. The highest leakage under the office was from the Tatopani Distribution Centre in Myagdi. Its leakage was 5.71 percent in the last fiscal year, which surged to 41.78 percent this year. The total electricity leakage of 11 distribution centers under the Butwal Regional Office in Lumbini Province was 6.02 percent.

The highest leakage of 19.79 percent was at Gulmi Distribution Centre. The overall electricity leakage of seven distribution centers under the Surkhet Regional Office in Karnali Province was 10.58 percent, which was a reduction from 13.32 percent in the last fiscal year. Rukum (West) Distribution Centre had the highest leakage under the office.

The leakage of the center was 27.13 percent in the last fiscal year and it had gone up to 36.65 percent this fiscal. The overall electricity leakage of 12 distribution centers under the Attaria Regional Office in Sudurpaschim Province in the five months of this fiscal was 5.98 percent. In the same period last year, the leakage was 5.76 percent. Bajhang Distribution Centre had the most leakage under the office at 21.91 percent.

With his dedication and management skills, MD Ghising showed that there is nothing impossible including reducing the electricity leakage to a single digit.



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- सामाजिक सञ्जालमा अपरिचित व्यक्तिको साथी बन्ने अनुरोधलाई विश्वस्त भएर मात्र प्रतिक्रिया जनाऔं।
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