



**OPINION**  
Dipak Gyawali



**ENVIRONMENT**  
Batu Uprety

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# NEW SPOTLIGHT

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**FNCCI PRESIDENT DHAKAL**

## The Right Man In The Right Place

### INSIDE



**FOREIGN SECRETARY IN CHINA**  
MEANINGFUL VISITS



**UPPER TAMAKOSHI**  
NEW VISION



**PROYEL**  
ENGAGING YOUTH



# Happy New Year

## 2080

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## Notes From The Editor



With the appointment of NP Saud as a new foreign minister, the administration of Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda has extended its cabinet for the ninth time in the previous four months. The cabinet will be incomplete because the Nepali Congress has failed to submit three additional cabinet members. As the day for the House of Representatives by-elections approaches, three major political parties are attempting to sway voters in the final hours. Nepali Congress, CPN-UML, and Rastriya Swamtra candidates Parties are neck and neck in two Chitwan and Tanahu constituencies. However, candidates from two regional parties, Sanghiya Samjyadi and Janmat Party, are running for the seat in Bara. People's attitudes change throughout time as a result of populist slogans used by political parties; the winner of the elections has yet to be determined. Despite the opposition's allegations, Rastriya Swamtra Party President Rabi Lamichane will easily win the elections. However, the election in Tanahu will be decided by how many votes NC defector and Rastriya Swamtra Party candidate Dr. Swarnim Wagle receives from the CPN-UML. According to reports, Uprendera Yadav, the big chairman of the Sanghiya Samajbadi Party, is lagging his rival Janamat party. Given the significance of the private sector to the nation, we have decided to write a cover article this week about Chandra Prasad Dhakal, the new president of the FNCCI. Dhakal's leadership in the private sector is crucial to getting the economy back on track.

**Keshab Poudel**  
Editor

# CONTENT

**NEWSNOTES** 4

**BUSINESS BRIEF** 8

**OPINION**  
Dipak Gyawali 10

**FOREIGN SECRETARY IN CHINA**  
Meaningful Visits 12

**ENVIRONMENT**  
Batu Uprety 22

**UPPER TAMAKOSHI**  
New Vision 24

**Dan Edward**  
Labor of Love 29

**TRENDS**  
Malena Villa 30

**PROYEL**  
Engaging Youth 32



**COVERSTORY: FNCCI PRESIDENT DHAKAL : The Right Man In The Right Place** 18



**POLITICS : A Looming Crisis** 16



**EU SUPPORT : Fight Against COVID-19** 17

लघुवित्तको कार्यक्रम मार्फत ग्रामीण समुदायको आम्दानी एवं रोजगारीका अवसरमा अभिवृद्धि गर्नका लागि गरिबी निवारण गर्ने कार्यमा सघाउ पु-याउने उद्देश्य लिएको यस वित्तीय संस्थाले देश भरी एघार (११) वटा इलाका कार्यालय र केन्द्रीय कार्यालय मार्फत ७६ जिल्लाका १३४० वटा साना किसान कृषि सहकारी संस्था लि. र समान प्रकृतिका अन्य सहकारी संस्थाहरु मार्फत लघुवित्तका लागि थोक कर्जाका साथै गैह्र वित्तीय सेवा समेत उपलब्ध गराउँदै आएको छ । नेपाल सरकार, अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय दातृ संघ/संस्थाहरुको सहकार्यमा समुदायमा आधारित सहकारी संस्थाहरु मार्फत सामाजिक तथा सामुदायिक कार्यक्रम संचालनमा समेत सहयोग पुऱ्याउँदै आएको छ ।

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## NEWSNOTES

### UN Under-Secretary-General Alisjahbana Calls On DPM Shrestha And Finance Minister Dr. Mahat

Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana paid a courtesy call on Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister Narayan Kaji Shrestha.

During the meeting, UN under-secretary-general Alisjahbana shared with DPM Shrestha about the workshop to be held in partnership with National Planning Commission in regard to Nepal's graduation from least developed country to developing country in 2026.

She said representatives of some LDCs will also participate in the workshop.

In response, DPM Shrestha said that Nepal was making necessary preparation for it addressing the remaining challenges and obstacles for the graduation to the developing country from the status of LDC. He thanked the UN for the coordination and cooperation in this regard.



Issues pertaining to further consolidation of the relations between the global body and Nepal were also discussed during the meeting,

according to the secretariat of the DPM and Home Minister Shrestha.

Visiting UN Under-Secretary-General Alisjahbana also calls on Finance Minister Dr. Prakash Sharan Mahat. During the meeting, they also talk about integrated financing framework for #SDGs acceleration and Nepal's readiness to convene & leverage more south-south cooperation for it.

Similarly, UN Under-Secretary-General Alisjahbana also met Minister of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation Shakti Bahadur Basnet, National Planning Commission Vice Chair Min Bahadur Shrestha and secretary Kebal Bhandari.

During the meeting, UN Resident Coordinator in Nepal Hanaa Singer-Hamdy was also present.

### Looking Forward To Further Deepening Nepal, India Relations: Foreign Minister Saud

Newly appointed minister of Foreign Minister NP Saud said he is looking forward to further deepening Nepal, India relations.

Reciprocating to the congratulatory message of External Affairs Minister of India Dr. S. Jaishankar, foreign minister NP Saud tweets, "thank you very much for your warm felicitations Dr. S. Jaishankar," I look forward to working closely with you to further deepening Nepal-India relations."

External Affairs Minister of India Dr. S. Jaishankar

congratulate N.P. Saud on his appointment as the Foreign Minister of Nepal.

"Look forward to working together to strengthen our multifaceted partnership. Best wishes for success in your new role," Tweets Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar.

Newly appointed Foreign Minister NP Saud has said government would continue intimate relations with neighbours.

Assuming the office at Foreign Ministry on Sunday, Minister Saud reminded that Nepal is a peaceful country and has harmonious and peaceful relations with all other countries since historical time. "In the days to come, Nepal continues intimate relations with all countries and neighbours, thereby making Nepal a country known as a peaceful and democratic one.

Earlier, the Minister was administered the oath of office and secrecy by the President itself.

### UN Resident Coordinator Hanaa Singer-Hamdy Presents Her Credentials To Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal

The United Nations Resident Coordinator in Nepal Hanaa Singer-Hamdy presented her credentials to the Right Honorable Prime Minister of Nepal Pushpa Kamal Dahal on April 4, 2023.

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres appointed Hanaa Singer-Hamdy of Egypt as the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Nepal, with the approval from the Government of Nepal.

Following the UN Reform in 2019, the Resident Coordinator's function has been upgraded to be the representative of the UN Secretary General in member states. UN Resident Coordinator Hanaa is the highest-ranking official of the UN Development System in Nepal. She leads the UN Country Team and coordinates UN support to Nepal in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

Upon presenting her credentials, Hanaa Singer-Hamdy appreciated Nepal's contribution to global peace through peace-

keeping forces. She expressed the UN's commitment to accompany Nepal on the in-



clusive and sustainable graduation from the Least Developed Country (LDC) by investing in people, specially strengthening social protection, Disaster Risk Reduction and climate change mitigation systems by leaving no one behind. She also said the UN stands ready to support the government to complete the peace process and victim-centric transitional justice reform.

As UNICEF Chief in Nepal, she pioneered strategic programmes for scaling up sanitation, adolescents and multi-sectoral nutrition programmes, establishing strategic new alliances resulting in the government adopting national action plans. She has also led humanitarian programmes in Burundi and Haiti, and as a Regional Emergency Advisor for central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) coordinated setting up cross border humanitarian operations to Afghanistan, from central Asia, and Iraq, from south Turkey. She also provided technical support to emergency preparedness programmes in the North Caucasus, and Kyrgyzstan.

### Indian Ambassador Naveen Srivastava Paid A Courtesy Call To Foreign Minister Saud

Ambassador of India to Nepal Naveen Srivastava



paid a courtesy call on Foreign Minister N P Saud today at Ministry of Foreign Affairs Singha Durbar.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ambassador Srivas-

tava conveyed message of congratulations from Minister of External Affairs India Dr. S. Jaishankar to the Foreign Minister on his appointment as the Foreign Minister of Nepal.

### US Ambassador Thompson And DPM Shrestha Discuss Matters Relating To Nepal-US Bilateral Relations

US Ambassador to Nepal Dean R. Thompson paid a courtesy call on Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs Narayan Kaji Shrestha.

In the meeting held at Ministry of Home Affairs today, the two discussed various matters relating to Nepal-US bilateral relations and the exchange of cooperation, according to Kamal Giri, press coordinator of DPM Shrestha.

On the occasion, the Minister said that the incumbent government focused on completing the remaining task of the peace process as per the spirit of the Comprehensive Peace Accord, and sought support from Nepal's friendly international donors towards this.

Shrestha informed the US envoy Thompson that the related Bill was already presented in the parliament to ensure transitional justice.

Ambassador Thompson said that the US wanted to see completion of remaining task of peace process in Nepal and pledged to take the lead to facilitate with diplomatic stakeholders for the same.



To the concern expressed by the American envoy on the prospects of political instability affecting the development works, DPM Shrestha assured that it would not affect the development endeavors, stating that Nepal was still in the process of institutionalizing federal democratic republic system.

Furthermore, Thompson said that the US government would provide full support in strengthening democracy in Nepal.

Since the Peace Corps' works were affected after COVID-19 pandemic, Ambassador Thompson requested with DPM Shrestha on easing off the issuance of visa for Peace Corp volunteers, to which the latter committed to facilitate in the matter in coordinating with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Thompson also expressed concerns surrounding American investment in Nepal and security of the American working in Nepal to which DPM Shrestha assured of full security for that reports RSS.

### First Batch Of Chinese Tourists Arrived In Nepal From Kunming

One hundred and eighty Chinese tourists have arrived here on a chartered flight from Himalayan Airlines.

The team of Chinese tourists arrived in Kathmandu on the eve of the Nepali New Year this morning through Nepal Big Mountain Travel.

Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, Sudan Kirati, Chinese Ambassador to Nepal, Chen Song, Chief Executive Officer of Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) Dr Dhananjay Regmi, among others, welcomed the Chinese tourists.

Talking to media persons, Minister Kirati said they were very happy to welcome such a large number of Chinese tourists for the first time after the coronavirus pandemic and on the eve of the Nepali New Year.



## NEWSNOTES

“Guests are god. We always welcome foreign guests as a god,” he mentioned. Minister Kirati expressed the belief that such activities would help further strengthen Nepal-China relations.

Saying there was a great role of the Chinese government in the construction of Pokhara International Airport, he opined that Nepal wanted to directly connect Pokhara International Airport with China by air.

Minister Kirati expressed hope that Chinese tourists would like Nepal as some of the cities of Nepal are similar to Chinese cities.

Similarly, Chinese Ambassador Song said China has allowed Chinese tourists to go abroad after coronavirus came under control. He shared he was very happy to get welcome Chinese tourists to Nepal.

Likewise, CEO Regmi mentioned that with the arrival of Chinese tourists, Nepal’s tourism industry, which was hit hard since 2019, is more excited.

Nepal should involve in tourism promotion targeting Chinese and Indian tourists, he added.

Proprietor of Nepal Big Mountain Travel and tourism entrepreneur Sudarshan Nepal expressed happiness over arriving of Chinese tourists after China on March 10 put Nepal on the list of tourism destinations after the coronavirus pandemic.

The Chinese tourists would visit various tourism sites of Kathmandu Valley as well as Poon Hill during their one-week stay in Nepal.

### Children Of Karnali Presented Their Budget

The children of Karnali presented their own budget in the Children’s Parliament Exercise Program organized in Surkhet district, where they highlighted the need of scaling up child nutrition grant throughout the country (which is now only implemented in 25 districts).



The mock parliament session was organized with the aim of providing information about the parliamentary system.

Also, in the House, children expressed their views on child marriage prevalent in Karnali, development works, child rights issue as well as contemporary issues of the country.

48 children from 21 schools in 10 districts of Karnali Province participated in the Mock Parliament Exercise Program organized by the Federal Parliament Secretariat under the Federal Children’s Parliament Program, supported by the European Union in coordination with UNICEF Nepal, UN Women, Mitra Samaj and Decco Nepal among others.

Children from Karnali have played the roles of Prime Minister, Minister, Speaker, and Member of Parliament of the opposition party among others.

“What do they do in the parliament? What kind of

work? What are the positions; In general, I had no idea how the parliament works,” Kalpana Acharya, a participant from Subhkalika Rural Municipality, Kalikot district, said, “I felt like I was the Prime Minister, the President. On top of that, I am thinking of going towards politics in the future, and after participating in this exercise, I felt that this will contribute a lot in my political journey.”

Bikash Raj Giri, another participant from Bheriganga Municipality, Surkhet, said that if a student goes and becomes a Member of Parliament in future, this practice has given knowledge about what should s/he do in the parliament.

The chief guest of the session, Member of the Parliament, Amar Bahadur Thapa said these children are very Lucky enough to get such training in small age. “It will be easy for them to understand the process, once they become parliamentarian,” he added.

### Australia’s Ambassador To Nepal Felicity Volk Made A Courteous Call To COAS General Sharma.

Felicity Volk, Australia’s ambassador to Nepal, met with Chief of Army Staff (CoAS) General Prabhuram Sharma at Nepal Army Headquarters.

They discussed bilateral relations and mutual interests during the meeting. The Nepali Army believes that such a meeting will assist to strengthen the friendship between the two countries.



### DPM Shrestha And Indian Envoy Discuss PM Prachanda’s Visit To India

Indian Ambassador to Nepal Naveen Srivastava paid a courtesy meeting to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs Narayankaji Shrestha at Ministry of Home Affairs.

The two discussed Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda’s impending visit to India, historic ties between the two countries, continuous cooperation and border security among others, according to the Secretariat of DPM Shrestha.

Setting up an ‘Integrated Check Post’ at Rupaidiya (Nepalgunj), Sunauli (Bhairahawa) and Dodhara Chandani areas also figured during the discussion between them.



In the meeting, DPM Shrestha informed that PM Prachanda's official visit to India would be decided very soon, said the Secretariat.

### Chinese Ambassador To Nepal Chen Song Visited Lumbini

Chinese ambassador to Nepal Chen Song paid a visit to Maya Devi Temple and Lumbini areas. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs Narayan Kazi Shrestha was also present during the visit.



Ambassador was on a part of his visit

to inspect the road construction in Butwal-Narayanghat and Mugling-Pokhara with DPM Shrestha and Minister of Infrastructure and Transport and other ambassadors.

"Very honor to visit the Maya Devi Temple, Tilaurakot Kapilvastu and Chinese Temple in Lumbini. Exploring more cooperation opportunities between China and Nepal on culture, religion and tourism in Lumbini!," tweets ambassador Chen Song.

### Japan Hands Over Medical Equipment To Community Health Center In Bhaktapur

Kikuta Yutaka, Ambassador of Japan to Nepal handed over medical equipment to the community health center in Bhaktapur. The Government of Japan provided Medical Equipment to the Community Health Center in Suryabinayak Municipality, Bhaktapur District today. Ambassador also attended the entire ceremony.

Under the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) of the Japanese Government, the project to install medical equipment for breast cancer testing, thyroid testing, and diabetes testing at the Valley Health Center



run by the Laborer Women and Child Welfare Council (LWCWC) was supported with USD 74,860 (approximately NPR 8.9 million).

Since its establishment in 1996, LWCWC has focused on maternal and child health care by providing free diagnosis, free birth assistance, and basic medicines in rural areas. In addition, the center's doctors and nurses regularly visit surrounding communities to provide counseling and raise awareness of basic health issues. However, the center previously lacked needed medical equipment and was unable to test for breast cancer, thyroid dysfunction, and diabetes.

Now, with this project, it can perform regular and appropriately timed examinations for these diseases. On this occasion, Ambassador Kikuta congratulated and expressed his appreciation for the efforts made by everyone involved in the project. He emphasized that early detection of diabetes, breast cancer and thyroid dysfunction is crucial.

He is confident that the project will enable early detection of these diseases and contribute to better health and quality of life for the individual, the family and, ultimately, the entire community. He also expressed his hope that the outcome of this project will greatly contribute not only to the development of local health care, but also to the development of the community as a whole, thereby deepening the friendship between the peoples of Japan and Nepal.

GGP was established to implement projects directly benefiting people at the grassroots level for community socio-economic development. Since 1991, over 200 GGP projects have been implemented in Nepal.

### Australian University of Newcastle Supports Women And Girls' Health Program In Nepal

Kavitha Kasynathan, Head of Development at the Australian Embassy in Nepal, met with Professor Roger Smith from University of Newcastle, Australia.



The University has piloted range of initiatives to support women and girls' health in rural areas in partnership with Dr Binod Sharma, Secretary, Ministry of Social Development Gandaki Province, according to twitter handling of Australian Ambassador to Nepal Felicity Volk.

The University is piloting free distribution of sanitary napkins across Nepal to incentivising antenatal examinations, and a helicopter evacuation program for obstetric emergencies enabling women and girls to access critical health service tweeted ambassador Volk.

## BUSINESS BRIEF

### Himalaya Airlines' Starts Charter Flight from Kunming

Himalaya Airlines announces the charter flight service from Kunming Changshui International Airport (KMG), People's Republic

of China to Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA), Kathmandu, Nepal starting from April 13.



Himalaya Airlines' H9 785 Airbus A320-214 landed 180 Chinese tourist passengers and welcomed total 700 more passengers in the upcoming charter flights from Kunming to Kathmandu.

After three years of COVID-19 pandemic related restrictions, with a motive to increase the inflow of tourists in Nepal, this is a remarkable step taken by Himalaya Airlines initiating Nepal's first Charter flight services from China to Nepal, bringing Chinese tourists in the nation.

Vice President Vijay Shrestha expressed his excitement and thanked the government officials of China and Nepal for their support in making the charter flight service possible.

He also added, "This is a significant step towards strengthening the bilateral relations between Nepal and China. We are proud to facilitate the movement of passengers between these two important countries and plan to increase this relationship with more Chinese destination in the coming days. With the motive to promote tourism and aviation industry of Nepal, Himalaya Airlines always takes a step forward for the nation. We are committed to providing exceptional service and making the journey a memorable experience for our passengers."

### NIMBL Opened An Extension Counter in Koshi Pradesh

Nepal Investment Mega Bank Limited (NIMBL) has just opened a new extension counter in Dangihat, Belbari, Morang.

Nepal Investment Mega Bank Limited has extended the extension counter at Dangihat in Kosi Province. The Bank has launched an extension counter on Friday at Dangihat located in Belbari Municipality Ward No. 9 of Koshi Province.

Dil Prasad Rai, Mayor of Belbari Municipality and Rajeev Gajurel, Head of Koshi Province of the Bank, jointly inaugurated the extension counter.

Inaugurating the event, Mayor Dil Prasad Rai said that financial transactions will now be done through banks, so it will be easy for

the residents. Shaligram Basnet, ward chairman of Belbari municipality ward number 9, was present in the program.

Speaking at the program, the ward president Shaligram Basnet said that banking facilities will be easily available to the cus-

tomers and industrialists in Dangihat and the surrounding areas, which are beyond the reach of banks.

In line with the Bank's policy of extending extension counter based services and network, the bank has already extended extension counters at various locations. At present, the bank has been providing specialized facilities through 296 branch offices and 51 extension counters.

### Nepal Army's Safa Himal Abhiyan 2023

A team of 13 Nepali Army volunteers led by Colonel Kishore Adhikari, who is leading the team for Everest and Lhotse mountains, reached Everest base camp today.

Under the leadership of the Nepali Army, Mountain cleaning campaign had launched on 28 March when Chief of Army Staff General Prabhu Ram Sharma handed over the campaign flat to Nepali Army personnel who were deployed for the cleaning of Mount Everest, Lhotse, Varunche and Annapurna.

With a purpose of protecting biological diversity and the environment, under the leadership of the Nepalese army, Safa Himal Abhiyan 2023 is now underway.

After the handing over of the ribm by COAS General Prabhuram Sharma to personnel of the Nepalese army who were deployed for the cleaning of Everest, Lhotse, Varunche and Annapurna mountains. the the campaign started last month.



### Nepal Army Team Started To Collect The Garbage From Mountains

Under Safa Himal Campaign, Nepalese Army's clean up team reached base camps of various mountain piks including Everest, Annapurna and other base camps.

Similarly, the Barunche Himal cleaning team and Chaulagiri Team are engaged in various activities to adapt themselves to the mountain environment to make the mountain cleaning work more effective.

Under this campaign, which is being carried out under the slogan of World Environment Day, with the goal of collecting about 35 tons of waste from

Everest, Lhotse, Annapurna and Barunche mountains, the campaign will be conducted as a global challenge of environmental pollution and global temperature. The Nepali Army believes that awareness will increase to minimize the impact.

The NA has targeted to collect of at least 35,000 kilograms of decomposable and non-decomposable waste from Mount Everest, Lhotse, Barunche, and Annapurna. The target is to collect 10,000 kgs of garbage



from Everest, 5,000 from Lhotse, 10,000 from Barunche, and 10,000 kg from Annapurna, according to NA spokesperson Krishna Prasad Bhandari.

The NA has accorded priority to the implementation of the government's national initiative to maintain the cleanliness of the world's highest mountains.

Since 2019, the NA has been conducting the Clean Mountain campaign to help clean the mountains while spreading awareness about the adverse effects of climate change and human-induced waste in the Himalayas.

The campaign is conducted in coordination and collaboration with various governmental and non-governmental organizations working in the sector. The campaign is expected to make a significant contribution to attracting tourists and mountaineers while also preserving the mountains for future generations.

It is estimated that there are about 14,000 tons of garbage and more than 300 dead bodies on Mt. Everest alone.

For the campaign this year, 13 NA personnel are mobilized for Everest and Lhotse, 9 for Barunche, and 10 soldiers in Annapurna along with a Sherpa guide and helpers. The campaign will be conducted from this March 28 to June 6.

The campaign has joined by the Department of Tourism and Environment, Khumbu Pasang Lhamu and Annapurna Rural Municipalities, Everest National Park Administration Office, Himalaya Rescue Association, Expedition Operators Association, Nepal Tourism Board, Nepal Mountaineering Association, Trekking Agents Association of Nepal.

### IMF Cuts 2023 Nepal's Growth Forecast

The International Monetary Fund has cut its global growth forecast to 2.8 percent for this year, down 0.1 percentage point from the previous projection in January.

The IMF released its latest World Economic Outlook report on Tuesday. The fund says global growth is forecast to settle at 3 percent in 2024.

According to the release, IMF has also downgraded Nepal's growth rate from its initial estimate. The IMF says the economy is expected to expand by 4.4 percent this fiscal year—from mid-July 2022 through mid-July 2023. It had previously estimated a 5 percent annual growth rate. The report says that although price increase rates are generally on a declining trend globally, inflation remains stubbornly high. It also cites recent financial sector turmoil including the failures of US banks.

The report says side effects from rapid hikes in interest rates by central banks are becoming apparent, as fears of contagion have risen across the broader financial sector.

### EU Ambassador Deprez Calls On Finance Minister Dr. Mahat

Nona Deprez, Ambassador of the EU to Nepal paid a courtesy call to Minister of Finance Dr. Prakash Sharan Mahat at the Ministry of Finance.



“The European Union is one of the most important grant partners of Nepal, on budget, on red

book,” tweets ambassador Deprez. “Good conversation on public finance management reforms with Hon’ble Minister of Finance Mahat.”

According to Minister Secretariat, Minister Dr. Mahat and ambassador Deprez discussed the matter of bilateral interest and support. Minister Dr. Mahat thanked European Union and ambassador for contributal support in Nepal’s development programs.

### Jhapa’s Juropani Substation In Operation, Improvement In Power Supply

A new 33-11 KV substation has come into operation at Gauradah Municipality-7 Gwaldubba, Juropani in Jhapa. The substation was constructed through the distribution system strengthening and expansion project under the Nepal Electricity Authority Project Management Directorate.

After starting to supply electricity from the substation, the problem of low voltage faced by the electricity consumers from Gauradah in Jhapa to the Indian border in the south will be solved.

Five feeder lines of 11 kV have been taken out from Juropani substation connected with power transformer of 6÷8 MVA capacity for local power supply. Gauradah, Maharani, Baigundhura and Gaurigunj feeders of 11 KV have been removed from the substation and one more feeder has been kept in reserve.

The substation was put into operation (charged) on Sunday. In the first phase, the Maharani feeder has been brought into operation and the rest of the feeders will be brought into operation gradually.

At present, electricity supply was given from Padajugi (Damak) 132 KV substation through 11 KV distribution line to Goradah, Juropani, Maharani, Gauriganj and other areas. As the 11 KV distribution line was too long, there were problems such as low voltage and tripping in that area. After starting to supply electricity from Juropani substation, the problems faced by the consumers have been solved and the electricity supply has become sufficient, reliable and of good quality. Farmers in that area have been irrigating the fields by drawing water from electric motors. Durgadatta Subedi, assistant engineer of the project involved in testing, operation and charging, said that the 280 volt line was coming earlier, but after the 400 volt line started to flow from the new substation, the equipment of the Kutaniipisani mill in that area, including the water pump, started working well.



About 18 km long 33 KV line from Padajugi to Juropani is under construction. In some places, the line could not be pulled due to the obstruction of local residents. As it is necessary to solve the problem of electricity supply in Gauradah area, as an alternative system, a line has been taken from the side of Padajugi-Gaurigunj road and Juropani substation has been brought into operation.

The substation was built with the investment of the Nepal government and authorities and concessional loans from the Asian Development Bank.

# Nepali Diaspora: Its Changing Nature And Implications



BY: DIPAK GYAWALI

It was my first trip back to the US in almost eight years and post-Covid, to deliver a seminar at New Mexico Water Resources Research Institute (NMWRRI) on how Cultural Theory sees “wicked water problems” under climate change impact, and then to take part in the UN World Water Conference being held in New York by that world body after 47 years. What I saw of the Nepali and Indian diaspora there forced me to ponder anew this old issue as I outline below.

One does meet Nepalis working abroad in the most unexpected of places. Relatives of mine taken on a cruise in the Bahamas by their American relatives were stunned to find the cruise ship had many Nepali cooks, waiters and security staff! Not what one would expect of Himalayan highlanders. Running into Nepalis in dhabas from Gorakhpur to Bangalore is no surprise; but I was amazed to find them in Bangkok’s mega store MBK next to Chulalongkorn University. Even more flabbergasted was I to find out they were Burmese Nepalis from near Mandalay, and their bhinaju (brother-in-law, also from Burma) was a Gyawali! Indeed, the biggest Hindu temple in Yangon across the lake from the famous Shwedagon pagoda is serviced by a Nepali priestly family.

There have been historical migrations of Nepalis seeking better opportunities outside their homeland (which has expanded into modern labour market in many ways over the last few decades). Our highlander ancestors have fought in the army of Punjab Maharaja’s army against the British, and later as British (and Indian) Gurkhas till today even in Afghanistan. And vice versa, others have migrated to Nepal because of wars and invasions in the Ganga plains or problems in Tibetan highlands over the centuries. Now, starting with the last decades of the 20th Century, that pattern has changed dramatically: skilled and unskilled Nepalis are heading to new destinations in the Gulf, Malaysia and South Korea while educated Nepalis make it to Europe, America and Australia in both academia and industry.

It is hard to find ANY Nepali family today, rich or

poor, without one maybe even two or more members in the diaspora. According to official report, over 1.1 million labour migration approvals were issued between 2019-2022, and of those coming back, the estimate was most went back after a short stay at home. It resulted in an inflow of 7.5 billion US\$ in 2022, far outstripping foreign aid and any other traditional inflows. Indeed, the World Bank estimates that personal remittances accounted for 27.6% of Nepal’s GDP in 2015, declining to 22.7% only in Covid-plagued 2021. A classic case of highly unstable ‘Dutch Disease Impact’ economy, if any, that has promoted a highly corrupt rent-seeking political regime!

The changing nature of that migration in modern times was first demonstrated to me at the 2006 March World Water Forum in Mexico City. Given the ongoing “regime change” political upheaval in Nepal at the time, official Nepal was totally absent without a formal government delegation. Informal Nepal was, however, quite dominant: many Nepalis working in universities and INGOs abroad received all kinds of international water awards there, many such were active participants or organizers of various panels; and I myself was there as chair of an EU review panel of its water research funding that had late Prof. Tony Allan as rapporteur and some ten other professors from around the world as members. Individual professional excellence of Nepalis contrasted with collective incompetence of the Nepali state!

This was brought home even more dramatically in New Mexico’s Las Cruces, where in addition to NMWRRI interactions, I had the honour to deliver a keynote address to the 14th Nepali Students Association International Conference organized by Nepali Students Association (NeSA) of New Mexico State University. It was a large gathering of high professional standard, both in-person and virtually, of skilled Nepalis in a wide range of disciplines. It was truly amazing to see Nepalis mostly in their 20s to 40s not only enrolled as PhD students doing research (not so much on Nepal but on problems of their adopted home base) as

well as working across the globe as cutting-edge professionals (associate professors, senior researchers, corporate experts etc.) collaborating with Euro-American, Chinese, and South-East Asian colleagues.

Contrast this with what happens at Nepal's academic forums. Its premier university remains in lock-up (talabandi) nine months of the year; student unions are but gangs of street thugs affiliated to political parties; teachers prefer to kowtow before politicians for perks rather than opt for academic excellence; and students are less known for academic achievements and more for beating up teachers. Is it any wonder that young students (and their parents) opt to go abroad for education instead of enrolling in Nepali colleges? Indeed, this year a record number of young Nepalis received the much-coveted "no objection certificate" to go abroad for higher studies, draining a remittance-dependent economy even further of any national development possibility!

At the (erstwhile Royal) Nepal Academy of Science and Technology, former vice-chancellor Jib Raj Pokhrel initiated a "Scientists, return to Nepal" program. It was an abysmal failure for reasons less to do with science and technology or noble elevated emotions and more with Nepal's dismal economic absorptive capacity. There was no way, within current government rules and regulations, for scientists of the kind I met in New Mexico's conference to find scope for their skills in today's rent-seeking Loktantrick Nepal in normal circumstances. That program was revamped by the last VC Sunil Babu Shrestha as "brain pooling", allowing for more flexible working environment but NAST itself is currently, as with the country's Supreme Court, headless!

Given that experience, I argued for the following before the New Mexico Nepali crowd. Some of you may return, mostly because of a sense of family obligation; and if you do, you would have to completely re-think what your discipline is, how it can be modified and adapted to Nepali conditions to make it useful to yourselves and the country. It is psychologically not very easy to so re-vamp yourself, but if you do, the possibilities of what someone with your knowledge and experience can do in Nepal is endless. Many of us from the 1970s to 1990s who returned to Nepal

and are working in different fields from engineering and medicine to education and public service are living proof that it can be done; but it is not for the faint-hearted, nor is it a rose-strewn path.

The alternative I argued for is to give no more than 5 to 10% of your time to professional projects and activities in your janmabhoomi Nepal, retaining your excellent (and highly specific) work you are doing in your adopted karmabhoomi. You could design your research/action research, commercial or voluntary social service with similar bodies in Nepal of your choice, raise funding in your karmabhoomi (with minimal financial but maximal personnel and

in-kind contribution in Nepal) and work with old (and especially younger) Nepali colleagues. The primary benefits are the following: you get to apply and transfer your skills to Nepal and mentor its upcoming younger generation; you continue to be a high quality Nepali asset abroad (which would be a loss for the country if you gave up everything there, came back and could not find anything appropriate in Nepal);

and you not only build a bridge across continents but also assure yourselves an "insurance" toe-hold in Nepal in case you have to return home for whatever reason, which would not entail starting from scratch.

The highly professional and successful Indian community I saw in New York and New Jersey, thanks to India's Waterman Rajendra Singh and his outfit that hosted me there during the UN World Water Conference in March is testimony to that mixed path of diaspora linking together (even while remaining very successful in their adopted karmabhoomi) and helping the mother country. One of many examples would suffice to understand its limitless possibilities. Gandhian Society (based in New Jersey) and Save Indian Farmers (based in Arkansas) have banded together to get the Indian diaspora to help farmers in their home villages, which cannot be done without assuring them better local water management. It has provided both social and technical help, and given the Indian diaspora members a sense of purpose and meaning, and developed powerful social capital. Nepalis abroad could well emulate such examples.





FOREIGN SECRETARY IN CHINA

# Meaningful Visits

*Despite packed schedules in welcoming heads of state and governments from around the world, Chinese officials accord Nepalese Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Poudyal high-level treatment.*

By KESHAP POUDEL

As famously said by Queen Elizabeth I, “I observe and remain silent.” Bharat Raj Paudyal, the foreign secretary of Nepal, preferred to remain quiet despite having attended numerous meaningful high-level meetings in the capitals of the world.

Foreign Secretary Paudyal has demonstrated how senior bureaucrats should operate despite working quietly and in the background, assisting ministers in managing foreign relations and engaging with other nations.

Although he has main-

tained a low profile, foreign secretary Paudyal has demonstrated his ability to hold bilateral discussions with higher officials throughout his official visits to neighboring nations and other nations around the world.

While the Chinese government was busy welcoming the presidents of France, the European Union, Brazil, and other foreign dignitaries two weeks ago, Foreign Secretary Paudyal arrived in Beijing, China, for official bilateral consultations on April 6 and 7.

The visit of the delegation led by the Nepalese foreign

secretary Paudyal, however, was accorded the attention and importance it deserved by the Chinese foreign minister and foreign ministry personnel.

The People’s Republic of China’s Foreign Minister, Qin Gang, received a visit from Foreign Secretary Paudyal on April 6 despite his busy schedule. Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Gang met with a delegation led by the Nepalese foreign secretary Paudyal in addition to their official meeting.

Paudyal is the first Nepali

foreign secretary to meet at the delegation level with a mission led by the Chinese foreign minister since diplomatic ties between Nepal and China were established.

According to a news release from the Nepalese Embassy in Beijing, issues relevant to enhancing the long-standing bilateral relations and collaboration in Nepal and China, including the exchange of visits, development cooperation, trade, investment, and tourism, were discussed during the discussion.

Given the prolonged political unrest in Nepal, the relevance of the country's foreign ministry has increased for both of its neighbors. Paudyal also paid Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, the Indian minister of external affairs, a courtesy call on his visit to New Delhi last year and spoke with him about bilateral matters. India demonstrated the importance of Nepal's foreign ministry in keeping bilateral relations in high spirits and warm tune.

### **Paudyal's China Visit**

Foreign Secretary Paudyal arrived in Beijing on April 5th, leading a Nepali team to the 15th meeting of the Bilateral Diplomatic Consultation Mechanism between



Nepal's and the People's Republic of China's Foreign Ministries.

The delegation-level meeting was attended by Bishnu Pukar Shrestha, Nepal's ambassador to the People's Republic of China, Lok Bahadur Thapa, joint secretary from Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, senior officials from both countries Ministries of Foreign Affairs, and officials from the Nepalese Embassy in Beijing.

Foreign Secretary Paudyal thanked the Chinese government for including Nepal as an outbound

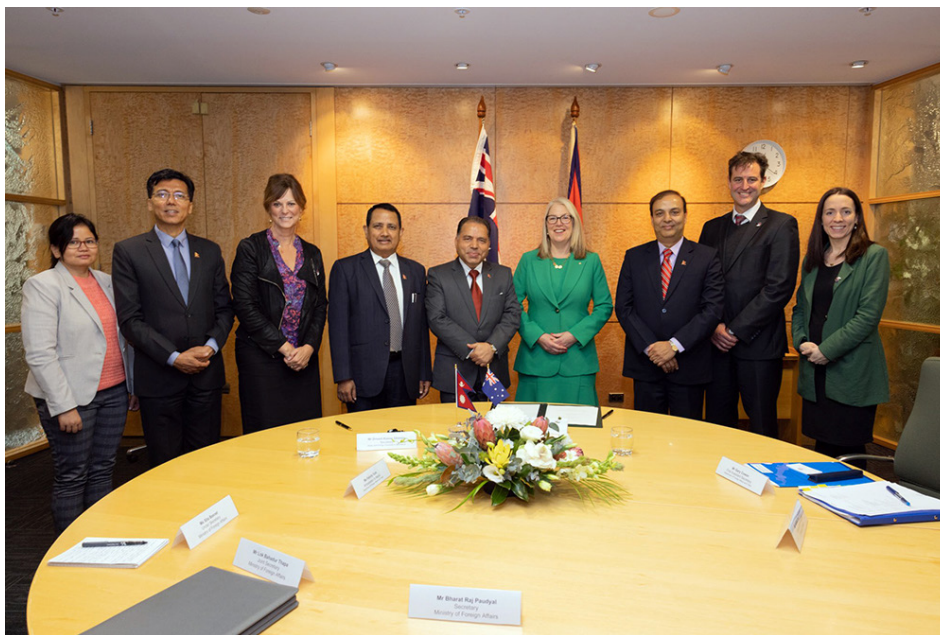
destination country for group tourism.

Similarly, foreign secretary Paudyal and the People's Republic of China Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Sun Weidong headed their respective teams to the meeting.

"The meeting was held in a cordial and friendly atmosphere." The Chinese Vice Minister praised Nepal for its unwavering adherence to the One China policy and respect for the five principles of peaceful coexistence. Foreign Secretary Paudyal praised China's stance of non-interference and respect for Nepal's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence," according to a Ministry of Foreign Affairs press statement.

Both sides assessed Nepal-China bilateral relations and cooperation and deliberated on ways to expand and consolidate cooperation in a variety of areas, including the exchange of bilateral visits; economic cooperation; trade, investment, and tourism promotion; building connectivity; and strengthening cooperation in





agriculture, education, culture, and people-to-people relations, among others.

The two sides talked about strengthening people-to-people contacts and cultural cooperation, increasing the number of scholarships for Nepali students and professionals, and developing technical specialists' capacity, among other things.

The summit also assessed the progress of several infrastructure development projects funded by China as well as Chinese-contracted projects and resolved to speed up project implementation in order to complete them on time.

Foreign Secretary Paudyal advocated preferential treatment for Nepali primary products including tea, coffee, herbal products, cooked buffalo meat, and other agricultural products in order to reduce the trade deficit. The Chinese side committed to encouraging Chinese investors to make mutually beneficial investments.

On this occasion, the two countries evaluated their collaboration in multilateral institutions, notably the United Nations, and

expressed mutual support for each other's candidacies. They also talked on how important it is to implement the UN Sustainable Development Goals and how the GDI can help promote the SDG agenda.

### Visit Of Indian Foreign Secretary

The visit of India's Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra was also notable. Indian Foreign Secretary Kwatra visited

on the invitation of Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal and held bilateral engagements. The meeting made some important decisions favoring Nepal, particularly in the power trade.

During the meeting, the two Foreign Secretaries discussed connectivity, trade and transit, power sector cooperation, agriculture, education, culture, health sector, and people-to-people connections, among other topics.

One of the meeting's significant agreements was that the two sides agreed to allow long-term power exports from Nepal to India using all products of the exchange market.

### Secretary Paudyal's Role

Although Paudyal was appointed foreign secretary almost two and a half years ago, following the promotion of Shanker Dash Bairagi to the chief secretary, the Nepalese foreign ministry handled



high-level visits from others, including Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi's visit to Lumbini and Chinese Foreign Minister's visit to Nepal.

In addition, Foreign Secretary Paudyal visited Australia, the European Union, the United Nations, and a number of other nations to hold bilateral consultative sessions. Paudyal, the foreign secretary, received a high-level answer.

Shanker Dash Bairagi, who served as foreign secretary for the longest time at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, managed several complex situations while being low-key and was able to achieve some success.

In the six-decade history of Nepal's foreign ministry, Paudyal, however, obtained high-level diplomatic official treatment in both neighbors and countries around the world after Bariagi, who remained foreign secretary during a critical moment.

During his visit to the European Union last year, Paudyal met with Stefano Sannino, Secretary-General of the European External Action Service (EEAS).

The official level meeting, with specific emphasis on Nepal, was held by the Secretary-General of the European Union. In the afternoon, the Foreign Secretary attended a lunch meeting hosted by the Managing Director for Asia

and Pacific at the EEAS. During the event, they discussed all important sectors of Nepal-EU ties as well as avenues of cooperation.

Following Paudyal's visit, a high-level team led by Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen visited Nepal. This is the first European Commissioner to reaffirm the EU's strong engagement with Nepal since 2015.

Foreign Secretary Paudyal's delegation-level meeting in

Power, Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and her meeting with Foreign Secretary Paudyal were equally significant. During the conference, perspectives on many elements of Nepal-US ties and cooperation were discussed.

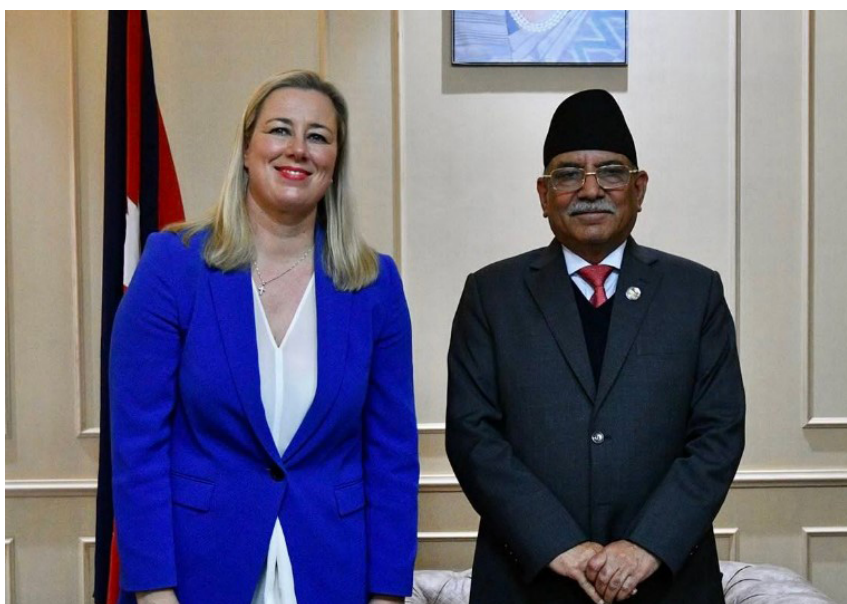
Secretary Paudyal thanked the United States for its ongoing support for Nepal's socio-economic development, including the USAID cooperation package last year, which helped Nepal in areas such as health and education, transportation and communication, agriculture, and the environment.

In addition to emphasizing Nepal's strong commitments to climate

change, the foreign secretary discussed the importance of a clear roadmap and ambitious goals for climate finance.

Ms. Power, the Administrator of USAID, praised Nepal's democratic growth and stated that the US will continue to support Nepal's socioeconomic development initiatives.

Utilizing his diplomatic skills, expertise, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs capacity, Foreign Secretary Paudyal has handled foreign relations preserving and promoting Nepal's key interests.



Canberra with Jan Adams, Secretary of Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, helped to deepen bilateral relations between the two countries. Foreign Secretary Paudyal was in Canberra from August 28 to August 30.

According to a statement published by the Nepalese Embassy in Canberra, the discussion focused on various areas of Nepal-Australia bilateral ties, as well as establishing and enhancing collaboration in several mutually beneficial sectors

#### **USAID Administrator's Visit**

The visit of Samantha

## POLITICS

# A Looming Crisis

*Recent political events and action indicate that there is a serious political crisis that endangers the constitution.*

By A CORRESPONDENT

**B**alen Shah, Mayor of Kathmandu Metropolitan City, has announced that members of parliament will be barred from entering his city if they do not act in favor of the city.

Hark Sampang Rai, Mayor of Dharan Sub-Metropolitan City, supports Shah and has issued a similar dictation to the elected MPs of his areas in the House. Two elected leaders delivered populist statements undermining the constitution.

In a similar vein, a group of political activists is protesting in eastern Nepal, demanding that the name of Koshi Province be changed. The violent protest has already caused damage to public property.

People across Nepal have been rallying in support of former King Gyanendra in recent days, seeking the restoration of monarchy and questioning Nepal's federal framework.

At a time when forces both within and outside the constitution are attacking the constitution, a group of distinguished civil society activists and constitutional experts have called for a larger national conference to decide on the constitutional amendment problem.

Daman Nath Dhungana, a former speaker and emerging civil society leader, has asked political leaders and civil society leaders to take a bold move to avoid societal turmoil and political upheavals.

He remarked that the unhappiness and resentment of the youth and new generation must be addressed in

order to avoid confrontation and instability. Dhungana recommended a national conference of all stakeholders to review and address the problems in the current constitution.

According to Dhungana, the RPP's emergency and the emergence of a new party indicated that people are eager to change. "This should be addressed in the constitution." "The current constitution, heavily influ-

constitutional fundamentals. He was speaking at an interaction program on 'State Mechanisms and the Challenges of Multi-Party Democracy' organized by the Tank Prasad Acharya Memorial Foundation in Lalitpur.

He asserted that the Kingdom of Nepal Constitution of 1990 was considerably superior to Nepal's current Constitution.

Despite criticism and dissatisfaction with the multi-party system, former minister and civil society leader Nilamber Acharya claimed on the show that there is no alternative to multi-party democracy.

Former Chief Justice Kalyan Man Shrestha has also predicted a political upheaval that will most likely lead to a political and constitutional crises.

Civil society leaders, media figures, and constitutional experts attended the

program, which was arranged to mark the historical day of the 1990 political revolution.

The day was highlighted by the importance of bringing all political forces together to address the current instability, as moderated by Tika Dhakal, political analyst, and Suhil Pyakuryal, president of the foundation.

During the discussion, senior advocate Dinesh Tripathy, right campaigners Subodh Pyakuryal, and Dr. Mahesh Kumar Maskey all spoke.

They prophesied that Nepal's dictatorial regime would not last. Tripathy noted at the time that all of the flaws in the constitution can still be fixed to make it functioning.



enced by Maoist goals, encourages a culture of power capture." There is a lack of accountability, as well as other fundamental irregularities of power division."

Dhungana remarked that the Kingdom of Nepal Constitution of 1990 performed much better than the current Nepal Constitution.

According to Dhungana, a new political consensus is being developed in order to foster unity among various political factions and constitutional bodies such as the administration, judiciary, and legislature.

On Monday, he stated that the current constitution is not functional because it lacks any principal and

## EU SUPPORT

# Fight Against COVID-19

## *EU Ambassador Nona Deprez Hands Over 1.5 Million COVID-19 Vaccines To Nepal*

By A CORRESPONDENT

**A**s Nepal is facing the rising the number of COVID-19 cases recently, a team Europe delivers over 1.5 million COVID-19 vaccines to Nepal through COVAX.

At a time when the government of Nepal has called its citizens to come to administer booster doses, the handing over the vaccine by EU Ambassador Nona Deprez handed vaccines to Dr Roshan Pokharel, Secretary at the Ministry of Health and Population is highly significant.

The vaccine support from Austria, Czech Republic, France, Greece and Italy will contribute to the Government of Nepal's efforts to continue vaccinating people across the country.

The vaccine was handed over in the presence of Honorary Consul of Austria Rajesh Babu Shrestha, Honorary Consul of Greece Bikram Pandey, Consul General of Italy Pratima Rana Pande, representative of Honorary Consul of Czech Republic, Mandira Khadgi, UNICEF Representative to Nepal a.i. Ms Usha Mishra and Public Health Administrator at WHO Nepal Dr. Md. Khurshid Alam Hyder.

According to a press release issued by Ministry of Health and Population, secretary thanked European Union and Team Europe for such a valuable humanitarian support.

"The EU and Team Europe are a major contributor to the COVAX facility that has done a commendable job in distributing vaccines to different countries around the world. The present donation of vaccines to Nepal under COVAX has come at an appropriate time when the number of daily infections seem to be rising steadily. We hope the vaccines will safeguard the people against COVID, the risk of which is not completely over," said EU Ambassador to Nepal, H.E. Nona Deprez.

The donation includes 400,320 doses from Austria, 362,880 doses from the Czech Republic, 195,840 doses from France, 348,480 doses from Greece and 195,840 doses from Italy bringing the total number of COVID-19 vaccines donated to Nepal

by EU member states to over 8.4 million. France and Italy have previously donated 685,400 and 663,600 doses of COVID-19 vaccines to Nepal respectively.

Nepal was among the first countries in the world to have launched COV-

of the virus. It is important for everyone to continue following public health guidelines to protect themselves and others, even after receiving COVID-19 vaccine."

On this occasion, French Ambassador Gilles Bourbao stressed on the need and the efficiency of multilateral solutions in order to combat global problems. Ambassador Bourbao remarked, "In the fight against COVID-19 pandemic, France has advocated and continues to work for equitable access to the vaccine, which we consider a global public good. Today, France is pleased to donate 195,840 doses of vaccines to Nepal through the COVAX facility in partnership with other European Union Member States and this would further help Nepal expand her vaccine coverage.

France has made available more than 120 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine since the beginning of the pandemic, through bilateral donations or through the COVAX facility to various countries, which we believe is an effective medium to tackle global problems. As the pandemic is not over yet, we are continuing this action of solidarity."

The COVAX Facility is part of the ACT-Accelerator, and brings together several key partners such as Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, WHO and UNICEF to ensure efficient and equitable global allocation of COVID-19 vaccines.

"UNICEF is committed to continue our support to facilitate COVID-19 vaccine delivery to Nepal through COVAX and getting those vaccines into people's arms, leaving no one behind. Including this latest dose-sharing from the EU member states, we have delivered over 44.8 million donated vaccines, in addition to the almost 10 million cost-sharing doses between the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank financing," said Mishra. "UNICEF is also working with the Government of Nepal to raise awareness of and trust in the COVID vaccines and engage communities to promote vaccine uptake."



ID-19 vaccination efforts in January 2021. So far, 83.1 per cent of the total population has been vaccinated against COVID-19, with 9,418,479 having received booster shots (until 28 March 2023). The nation is currently experiencing a rise in the number of daily COVID-19 cases.

The vaccine support from the EU member states – Austria, Czech Republic, France, Greece and Italy is expected to support the Government of Nepal's efforts to provide booster shots – particularly for vulnerable and at-risk groups including people who are older than 60 years or who have health conditions like lung or heart disease, diabetes or conditions that affect their immune system.

"Given the increasing number of daily COVID-19 cases in the country, the Government of Nepal is committed to continuing COVID-19 vaccinations. The timely and generous support from the EU member states is critical in strengthening our vaccination campaign," said Dr Pokhrel. "While vaccines are an essential tool in the fight against COVID-19, they are not the only tool. Other measures such as social distancing, wearing masks, and practicing good hygiene are still crucial in slowing the spread

## FNCCI PRESIDENT DHAKAL The Right Man In The Right Place

*Chandra Prasad Dhakal took over as the 20th President of the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) with a soft-spoken address and a firm objective to provide assistance to manufacturers and businessmen while recovering the economy. Instead of delivering a lengthy speech and making lofty promises, President Dhakal has presented a five-point agenda that is both purposeful and measurable.*

By A CORRESPONDENT

As American President Theodore Roosevelt once said, “Speak softly and carry a big stick; you will go far.” The newly elected president of FNCCI Dhakal has announced a long five-point plan in soft to go far.

President Dhakal took office at the FNCCI central office in Teku, Kathmandu, on Sunday, April 16, 2023, for three years. President Dhakal promised to work for the welfare of small company owners after taking office.

President Dhakal was

elected at the FNCCI’s 57th annual general meeting on April 11-12, and he will now lead the organization for the next three years. Similarly, Anjan Shrestha was elected senior vice president, Surkrishna Baidya was appointed vice president, Jyotsana Subba Shrestha was appointed associate vice president, and Hemraj Dhakal was appointed commodity vice president.

As president of the FNCCI, the country’s largest private sector group, Dhakal must handle a variety of economic concerns confronting the business community

in Nepal over the last few years.

Dhakal’s subsequent three years will be more challenging than those of his predecessors. Nepal is set to experience all kinds of challenges, from rising interest rates to declining economic activity and the global economic downturn.

The issue will probably affect small business groups and industries, making President Dhakal’s term more difficult. The difficulty, nevertheless, also presents chances. Dhakal has the talent and drive to deal with these difficulties since he succeeds in



business by converting obstacles into opportunities.

Everyone, including his rival and friends, agrees that Dhakal's unusual leadership ability can be helpful. The government and business sector must coordinate their efforts and work closely together to address the nation's economic concerns.

#### **Rises to the top**

Given his own skills and methods of dealing with crises in the past, business leaders are hopeful that Dhakal can bring about change.

As the country faces a serious economic crisis, Dhakal has wasted no time in getting to work, having taken the oath of office as president of the business group following the elections.

The senior VP will be automatically raised to the position of president under the provisions of the FNCC's constitution. He

was elected senior vice president roughly two and a half years ago. The election was later postponed because of the coronavirus outbreak.

#### **Dhakal: Successful Business Owners**

President Dhakal is a first-generation successful entrepreneur and industrialist. Dhakal, who was born in Amalchaur, Baglung district, in 2022BS, had been an entrepreneur since 2045BS. Dhakal, the founding chair of IME Group, has over four decades of entrepreneurial experience. In 2057 BS, Dhakal made the first successful commercial step by establishing IME remit, Nepal's first remit company.

IME Group is now investing in a number of firms and industries with a presence both in Nepal and internationally.

Dhakal has played an important role in the country's formal

economy by facilitating foreign remittances. More than 20,000 people are directly employed by the IME Group, while another 40,000 are indirectly employed in the country.

Dhakal is aggressively working to build new tourism destinations and infrastructure, including a cable car, in all seven provinces. He has received numerous major accolades for his contributions to the national industry and economy.

#### **Five Point Agenda**

Dhakal, the newly elected president, has stated his intention to accomplish five goals during his presidency. In the inauguration program of the Federation's newly elected leadership, he expressed his commitment to preparing a strategy to solve the current economic crisis, creating an investment environment, strengthening the partnership between the state



and the private sector, producing skilled labor and creating jobs, and determining the position of the private sector in the state's order of dignity to boost business morale.

When he took office, he stated that he is an example of how even a little merchant from a village can emerge under the leadership of the federation. "Friends are concerned that small businessmen will not be represented in the federation," Dhakal remarked. I rose through the ranks of the Federation by owning a modest business. Small and large enterprises alike are represented. I've also made a five-point pledge. I believe the government will also contribute to this effort."

He has stated his intention to develop skilled labor, create jobs, and identify the position of the private sector in the state's hierarchy of dignity in order to boost business morale.

"Friends are concerned that small business owners will not be represented in the federation." I rose

through the ranks of the Federation by owning a modest business. "Small businesses and all types of businesses," Dhakal explained.

Dhakal stated that he would work to elevate the private sector's dignity, build collaboration between the public and private sectors to create jobs, expedite the process of attracting more Foreign Direct Investment, and find solutions to the private sector's issues.

Dhakal stated that he was always in favor of appointing leadership through consensus. He praised former FNCCI Presidents

including as Umesh Lal Shrestha for their contributions. He believed that they had elevated the organization's image.

Dhakal is a first generation successful entrepreneur and businessman. He served on the FNCCI executive committee for two terms. He advanced up the leadership ladder, from investment committee chair to employment council chair, vice chair of associate, FNCCI Vice President, and now President.

President Dhakal has stated that he will prioritize five areas during his tenure: the development of a strategy to resolve the current economic crisis, the creation of an investment environment, the strengthening of the public and private sectors, the production of competent human resources and job creation, and the morale of entrepreneurs.

#### Position Switching

Outgoing FNCCI President Sekhar Golchha gave the oath of office and secrecy to Dhakal, as is customary. Dhakal has succeeded Golchha as the FNCCI's head.

Golchha, the outgoing





president of the Federation, stated during the event that he agrees with President Dhakal's five public commitments. Senior Vice President, Chairman of the Investment Committee, Employer Council, and Associate Vice President have all been held by Dhakal, a two-term member of Mahasangh.

Dhakal has improved his relationships with Golchha despite some initial conflicts between the two of them. After two years of collaboration, departing Golchha praised Dhakal's contribution and supported his successor's agenda for the following three years.

#### **Senior Vice-President Anjan Shrestha**

President Dhakal has a capable young hand in Anjan Shrestha, who was chosen as senior vice president. Umesh Lal Shrestha was able to win the election after deciding to withdraw from the race and then return.

Along with collaborating with Anjan's team, president Dhakal must also provide Sanghai's team, which lost in the first round of senior vice president, the appropriate amount of room. There needs to be solidarity among all people to fight the impending

economic crisis in the nation.

Given his prior experiences, President Dhakal is likely to unite all FNCCI groups to address the country's crisis. Dhakal is the right individual in the right position in the current situation.

The Laxmi Group, which includes Sujal Food and Dairy Products, the packaging sector, vehicle trading, infrastructure, and steel manufacturing, is led by newly elected Senior Vice-President Shrestha.

The current vice president of the commodity sector at the FNCCI is Anjan, a 53-year-old executive director of the Laxmi

Group, a company that manages manufacturing, agro-based, trading, and service industries. His tenure as president of the NADA Automobiles Association in 2015 marked the beginning of his leadership in professional organisations.

The company was founded by his father Ganesh Bahadur Shrestha as a candy store in Pokhara; today, the firm manufactures steel, food, packaging materials, dairy goods, and operates trade businesses in a variety of industries, including the automobile industry.

Newly elected FNCCI president Dhakal took office with a fresh team and attitude. But he has a very challenging and complicated future. Dhakal might successfully complete his term by reviving Nepal's economy using his own experiences, strategy, and style.

President Dhakal, who has the ability to play in a team and understands the need to do so given the country's current situation, is the ideal candidate for the job.



# EIA: Simply Paper Approval



BY: BATU UPRETY

Paper approval of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report does not produce desired results in lack of implementation of its environmental management plan (EMP) and environmental monitoring both at construction and operational stages. Monitoring provides useful information on state of implementation of mitigation and enhancement measures and updates on which measure worked and which did not.

Over two and half-decades of legal clearance to implement projects, requiring approval of Initial Environment Examination (IEE) or EIA informs complexities created in Nepal from this widely used tool to make the development sustainable and environment-friendly. EIA is a pre-project (pre-construction stage) study worldwide. In Nepal, EIA is carried out at project operational stage as well to comply simply with legal provisions, which indicates departure from its basic principle and global practice.

On 7 April 2023, the 16-floors under construction Summit Hotel and Residency affected about a dozen of residential houses close by it. Newspapers inform its construction without legal clearance on environmental matters (without approval of EIA report). The proposed 5-star hotel will have 130 rooms and 160 luxury apartments in 7 structures (<https://epaper.ekantipur.com/kantipur/2023-04-10/>). This has questioned the stage of EIA report preparation and approval. The Environment Protection Act (2019) empowers the government to fine the proponent up to NRs. 50 lakhs for non-compliance of legal provisions (if proposal is executed without approval of EIA report or if proposal is executed in a manner inconsistent with the approved report). However, EIA is a predictive tool and is prepared using available scientific evidences, practices, and learnings from monitoring and auditing results of similar projects.

Enforcement of environmental law in 1997 in-

stitutionalised the legal approval of projects requiring IEE or EIA level of study. New environmental law was enforced in 2020. A number of EIA reports have been approved during the last 26 years. Review of EIA reports clearly indicates inclusion of key elements of impact assessment from policy and legal review and baseline information to impacts identification and prediction (evaluation of significant impacts is not included in many reports) with mitigation and enhancement measures, monitoring and auditing provisions along with the environmental management plan. Alternative 'with and without' project, and 'within' project is poorly analysed in the reviewed EIA reports. This leads to make difficult the development proposal environment-friendly.

In 2006, one of the transmission line projects complained high budget estimate required for implementing project-induced adverse impacts mitigation measures. Taking note of understanding, experience and learnings in institutionalising the EIA process in Nepal and principles and practices of EIA process, proponents were asked to include in the EIA report the percentage of total project cost required for environmental measures. Cost required for implementation of enhancement and mitigation measures, environmental monitoring and auditing was considered as the environmental cost. During 2006 and 2008, most of the EIA reports submitted for approval included the percentage of estimated environmental cost which was sufficiently below 3 percent of the total project cost, meaning that project spending NRs. 100/ may require to spend lower than NRs. 3/ for maintenance and/or restoration of environmental quality to be degraded or damaged by the project activities. Inclusion of estimated environmental cost has been internalised. In figures, environmental cost may reach millions or billions for environment-sensitive projects to offset project-induced environmental damages.

Review of six projects on environmental cost for the environmental management plan (EMP) informs: (i) 0.67 percent for Upper Madi Hydro-Electricity Project (HEP); (ii) 1.58 percent without land price for Chujung Khole HEP; (iii) 2.49 percent without land price for Tatopani Khola HEP; (iv) 2.16 percent for Ghunsa Khola HEP; (v) 0.49 percent for Hongu Khola HEP; and (vi) 14.53 percent for Kankai Multipurpose Project (hydro-electricity generation, flood control, re-regulating reservoir, water navigation, fishery, tourism and irrigation components) of the total project cost. This multipurpose project is labelled as the 'game changer project'.

Question arises, what do we understand by environmental cost? What should be included in it? Is it related to offset or mitigate or enhance project-induced impacts? Who justifies that budget estimated for mitigation and enhancement measures or environmental monitoring and auditing is appropriate? Most of the approved EIA reports include cost for one time monitoring and undermine regular and/or intermittent monitoring considering its parameters and indicators. Proponents have started including social support cost on an average of 0.75 to 0.80 percent of the total project. The social support cost is normally proposed for construction and/or maintenance of school, village road, health post, and drinking water facilities. This informs small amount of budget required for the implementation of the adverse impacts mitigation measures and benefits augmentation.

Province Secretary in Karnali raised an issue related to the use of forest area for transmission line. It is difficult to find examples of socio-economic and infrastructure projects blocked by EIA process. If mitigation and enhancement measures are costly, proponent may withdraw implementation of environment-sensitive projects. EIA provides multiple opportunities to ensure 'development without destruction'.

Forest being a 'public resource' and considered

a 'free gift of nature', proponents exercised to prove 'no alternative' to implement projects outside the forest areas. It encouraged to develop a 'compensatory mechanism' in 2003 to conserve forests and biodiversity taking into consideration the provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Initially proponents were asked to plant trees at the rate of 1:5 (plant 5 saplings for each felled tree for project implementation and manage for 5 years).



After reviewing budget allocated in the EIA reports, forest conservation needs in Terai and hills, and additional pressure on forests, a compensatory plantation @ 1:25 was introduced as an 'win-win' approach. This approach positively provided forest area to the needy projects, restore degraded

areas and/or compensate the 'lost resources' through plantation and caring for 5 years. Proponents continued to influence the decision-making process to lower down this plantation provision. Government decided to apply 1:2 for hydropower projects. Recently, government has introduced 1:10 ratio. If proponent is unable for compensatory plantation, economic valuation of ecological goods and services provided or to be provided by the 'lost' forests can be estimated and equivalent amount can be paid to the owner of the forest resources before site clearance.

In Nepal, 'poor' understanding about the benefits and importance of EIA has undermined its use. Review of cost estimation for EMP, as mentioned above, urge proponents to triple-think to move towards environment-friendly development by conducting EIA of 'professional level'. Technical and nature-based solutions exist.



## UPPER TAMAKOSHI

# New Vision

*Mohan Gautam, the newly appointed CEO of Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Limited (UTHL), has stated that he wants to become the country's largest hydropower plant profitable so that the public shareholder can receive dividends and other benefits.*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Limited (UTHL) has finally named Mohan Prasad Gautam to the job of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) after more than seven months with an acting CEO. The five-member board of directors unanimously decided to name Gautam, an 11th level (Director) of the Nepal Electricity Authority, as the CEO at its 272nd meeting on the 28th of March despite several interventions and the insistence of Kul Man Ghising, Chairman of the Company and Managing Director of the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA).

Due to the lack of a CEO

to make operational choices and resolve issues at the local level, the UTHL generation, which began two years ago, has encountered multiple deadlocks. A week after being hired, Gautam visited the location and got into a fight with the locals, demonstrating his competitive leadership.

The Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Project, which has a 456 MW installed capacity and was created with domestic investment, was established, and Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Ltd was established to build, operate, and manage it.

The business intends to construct a separate 21-megawatt

project using the head acquired by diverting water from the Rolwaling River and combining it with the reservoir of the Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Project, therefore Gautam's appointment as CEO is also timely given the current situation.

For the engineering, procurement, and construction phases of the project, contracts have been signed. An additional 105 million units of energy will be produced annually by the project.

Additionally, 216 million extra units of energy are produced when the upper Tamakoshi and Rolwaling rivers are combined. 320

million additional energy units will be added to the grid annually.

CEO Gautam joined the NEA in 2060 and worked at the Upper Tamakoshi Hydroelectric Project in a variety of capacities from 2064 to 2072. From 2072 to 2073, he served as the project manager for the 635 MW Dudhkoshi reservoir project.

From 2073 to 2079, he served as managing director of the Trishuli Hydropower Company, the organization behind the 37 MW Upper Trishuli 3B Hydropower Project. At the moment, he is the authority's representative at Trishuli and Jagdulla Hydropower Company.

Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Ltd., which has a paid-up capital of 10.59 billion rupees, is owned by the NEA to the tune of 41%. 6% of the company is owned by Nepal Telecommunication Company, while 2% and 2%, respectively, of the founding shares are held by Citizen Investment Fund and National Insurance Institute.

The Employment Provident Fund's depositors own 17.28% of the company, along with 2.88% of the shares held by the company's loan-giving personnel, 8.84% by NEA employees, 15% of the general public, and 10% by Dolakhabasi.

#### Share Increase

Upper Tamakoshi, which only began generation a year ago, has proven that it is a project that will change the game. As a result of the project's massive electricity production, Nepal has gone from being an energy-scarce nation to one with an energy surplus, opening the door for the export of electricity from Nepal to India.

While the global energy crisis forced many nations into a tough financial situation, Upper



Tamakoshi has helped Nepal establish a somewhat more comfortable position with extra electricity.

Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Limited (UTHL) has demonstrated that the project cares about the interests of its shareholders in addition to boosting the national economy by choosing to issue right shares in a 1:1 ratio.

The company's earnings will be increased, and new CEO Gautam has already stated that he will use all of his efforts to enhance dividend payments to the company's public shareholders.

The Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Project has demonstrated that it may help the nation and its stockholders in the short term and the long term, as it was anticipated would happen a long time ago.

The Upper Tamakoshi Project, which is east of Kathmandu, is being built using funds from within the country. The completion date of the national pride project was originally slated to be in mid-July 2016, but was delayed due to the earthquakes, an Indian trade embargo, and several technical and social challenges.

Since Gautam isn't in charge of the Upper Tamakoshi, the firm intends to issue the appropriate shares. The paid-up capital will increase to 21.18 billion rupees following the issuance of the right share. Upper Tamakoshi's share price is currently less than Rs 500. The NEPSE has listed 105.9 million shares of UPPER.

#### Organization and funding

Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Limited, which was founded in March 2007, is an executing agency for carrying out the Project. Four public entities, namely the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), Nepal Telecom (NTC), Citizen Investment Trust (CIT), and Rashtriya Beema Sansthan (RBS), own the majority share (51%) of the company. In the company, NEA holds a 41% share, NTC 6%, CIT 2%, and RBS 2% apiece.

Similarly, the general public and residents of Dolakha District will have 15% and 10% share respectively. The remaining 24% share is taken by contributors to Employees Provident Fund (EPF), NEA & Companies staff and staff of finan-

## ENERGY



cial institutions providing loans.

The delay from Lot 2 Hydro-mechanical Contractor, Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Project (UTKHEP), which started a commercial generation of electricity last August, has proven to be a game-changer project in Nepal's electricity generation even though it has faced numerous natural and man-made obstructions like earthquakes, COVID-19, and Nepal-India border disruptions.

Nepal's energy status has shifted from being a net importer to becoming an exporter as a result of the project's consistent production. The initiative, which produced less expensive electricity, also assisted in lowering electricity bills and raising NEA's profit. The project has provided several benefits to lenders, consumers, and promoters; nonetheless, the primary issues are how to provide benefits to public shareholders and turn the initiative into a profitable operation.

Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Limited (UTKHPL) has reported positive financial results for the fourth straight quarterly period. The company has presented bills of

Rs. 8 billion, according to the unaudited Statement of Financial Position for the fourth quarter.

On August 20th, UTKHPL began its commercial operation date (COD) with four units, and on September 10th, 2021, all six units will be fully operational.

### MD Ghising's Contribution

The role of Kul Man Ghising's managing director of NEA will always be remembered for the project's successful creation and execution. He made a number of technical

judgments that prevented the project from failing. His tireless efforts allowed project work to continue uninterrupted even throughout COVID-19's national lockdown.

The MD and chairman of Company Ghising, who frequently traveled to the project site to oversee the project, played a crucial role in everything from building the tunnel at the earthquake-damaged road to importing a mixture to throw the concrete over penstock and pressurizing manufacturer companies to deliver on time.

With its daily peaking reservoir, UTKHPL can generate energy at a full capacity of 456 MW at peak time even during the dry season when the electricity production from the run of the river projects declined drastically.

With a natural head of 822 m and six underground units, it produces up to 2,281 GWh of electricity annually. After Rolwaling HEP commissioning approximately 315 GWh will add at all to Upper. This renewable energy will improve living conditions and promote economic development in the country.

After the commissioning of Rolwaling HEP, the Company UPER will be in a position to enhance



its income by 2 billion annually. This means, a 2 billion annual income added by investing another 8.5 billion for its construction. Moreover, Rolwaling will rescue the financial health of UPPER Tamakoshi.

According to the study, the project is expected to contribute around 1 percent to the GDP and

also help boost industrial production. The completion of the project has shown that Nepal can collect the fragmented capital within the country and invest in projects like Upper Tamakoshi.

Started full commercial production from Bhadra 25, 2078, UTKHPL has been generating the electricity in full capacity. However, compared to first and second quarterly, the income in the third 3rd quarter has reduced due to the low flow of water in the river and the reduction of Rs. 83,79,94,492 by NEA. Similarly, payment for increased interest rates and depreciation costs increased the loss amount of the company said unaudited 3rd quarter Statement of Financial Position released on Baisakh 2079.

To expand income, UTKHPL is considering a second expansion stage, the 20-MW Rolwal-

ing Khola Hydroelectric Project (RKHEP), which would contribute another 105 GWh of energy and enhance 210 GWh dry season energy from UTKHEP. After the completion of the process, the financial position will change in better way.

The company's goal right now is to limit other expenses and

Line, substations, and highways connecting northern distant districts. activities has accelerated.

Gautam has finished the 37 MW Trishuli 3 B project while serving as the managing director of

Trishuli Jal Vidhyut Company Limited. The project has now completed a sizable chunk of work after receiving proper guidance and devoted supervision.



lower interest since the project's development has already been finished and it is now in the generation stage. Due to delays throughout the construction phase, the project's cost increased.

The company's goal, according to CEO Gautam, is to give investors high dividends, guarantee a sizable income, and bargain with financial institutions to lower interest rates.

Regardless of share, the Upper Tamakoshi has made a significant contribution to the growth of the local infrastructure. Nepal's commercial activity have intensified thanks to the 220 kV Transmission

As the contractors' mobilization agent, Gautam is a skilled worker. The Upper Tamakoshi project will be profitable thanks to MD Gautam and the full support of NEA's management.

After Mrigendra Bahadur Shrestha, the first CEO of the company, had done all essential groundwork to begin building, Bigyan Shrestha concluded the project. At the moment, Gautam is Nepal's largest hydroelectric company's third CEO, and his job is to present a fresh perspective.

# SALIENT FEATURES UPPER TAMAKOSHI

## Home Salient Features

Type of Development =	Peaking Run-of-River (PRoR)
Location =	Lamabagar VDC, Dolakha District, Janakpur Zone, Central Development Region
Headworks Location =	Lamabagar, Lamabagar VDC
Powerhouse Location =	Gongar Gaon, Lamabagar VDC
Maximum Output =	456 MW
Annual Energy =	2,281 GWh
Gross Head =	822 m
Design Discharge =	66.0 m <sup>3</sup> /sec
Hydrology	
Catchment Area =	1,745 km <sup>2</sup>
Min. Mean Monthly Flow =	14.1 m <sup>3</sup> /sec.
Mean Annual Flow =	67.2 m <sup>3</sup> /sec.
Design flood Q <sub>1,000</sub> =	885.0 m <sup>3</sup> /sec
Diversion Dam =	22 m x 60.0 m (H x L)
Live Storage =	1.2 Million m <sup>3</sup>
Settling Basins =	2 Nos. L=225 m
Headrace Tunnel =	8.4 km (Cross Sectional Area = 32.14 m <sup>2</sup> )
Penstock (Vertical Shaft and Horizontal Tunnel) =	1,134.0 m
Power House (Underground) =	142.0m x 13.0m x 25.0 m (L x B x H)
Number of units =	6
Tailrace Tunnel =	2.9 km (Cross Sectional Area = 35.0 m <sup>2</sup> )
Access Road from Charikot of Dolakha District =	68.0 km
Transmission line =	220 kVA Double Circuit, 47.0 km (Gongar to Khimti Substation)



**Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Limited (UTKHPL)**  
**Annapurna Marga, Gyaneshwor, Kathmandu, Nepal**

Dan Edward

# Labor of Love

*Dan Edward, a retired US senior administrator and Peace Corps Volunteer, has published a book titled **Railways in Nepal**, which enriched Nepal's railway history*

By A CORRESPONDENT

The Rana Rule was a golden era for introducing modern technology to Nepal. Despite political setbacks, Rana monarchs implemented several social changes and brought modern technologies to the nation.

The era of Prime Minister Chandra Sumsher Rana is considered modern. During his time, contemporary technologies such as electricity, ropeways, and railways were introduced to Nepal. However, no one recognized Rana's significant contribution to Nepal's modernization and unification.

At a time when many Nepalese political leaders, intellectuals, and experts are unaware of Nepal's century-old railway history, Dan Edward, a retired senior US bureaucrat who served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Nepal in the 1960s, has reminded Nepalis of the long history in a great detailed archival talk.

Edward has made an enormous contribution to Nepal's history by publishing *The Railways in Nepal*. Based on archival research and images, the book combines the history of transportation and technology into one



package, revealing many unknown truths about Nepal's railways.

A significant number of people from many walks of life attended the presentation, which was moderated by journalist and rights activists and organized by Madan Puraskar Pustakalaya. In his presentation, Edward discussed railway expansion. Despite Nepal's century-long history of railways, Edward is the first to publish a book with detailed archival collections.

Edward is a retired senior US bureaucrat who served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Nepal. He was a geography teacher at St. Xavier's School and a public school in the Dhading district.

Westerners, notably Americans, have made significant contributions to Ne-

pal's history. Fr. Ludwig Francis Stiller (1928-2009), who was born in America and dedicated his life to Nepal, died as a Nepali citizen. Nepal's history would be incomplete without his efforts.

Edward contributed to Nepal's railway history by releasing the book *Railways in Nepal*. "During his time as a peace corps volunteer, Edward taught us geography at St. Xavier School," said Kanak Mani Dixit.

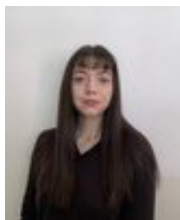
Dixit stated in his introduction that the book had various documents and images that were unfamiliar to Nepali readers.

Edward showed numerous key portions of Nepalese railways to former top administrators, historians, engineers, and journalists of various ages, including senior journalist Bhairab Risal.

Author Edward's presentation demonstrated that he worked hard to collect images and records about Nepal's railways.



# Historical Analysis Of The Imperial City Of Patan



BY: MALENA VILLA

One of the earliest settlements in the Kathmandu valley, Patan, was established by the Kirat royal family in the third century b.c. The Malla dynasty's kings extended the city in later decades, particularly in the 1600s.

The city was given the names Patan and Lalitipur in honor of the fictitious farmer Lalit and Yala, both of whom are connected to numerous tales about its founding.

King Shiva Malla, who unified the valley, conquered the city in the late 1500s. As was to be expected, throughout this reign, the city considerably grew as did Nepali craftsmanship and art. The city grew in population and had a reputation as a city of art because to its excellent artisans who could work with metals and carve wood.

King Prithivi Narayan Shah, the first monarch of Nepal, conquered it in 1768 and brought the nation together.

From its early beginnings, Patan symbolizes the blending of Buddhism and Hinduism, which has inspired its architecture. The city is full of Buddhist temples and monuments, such as the stupas that stand at each of its four corners and mimic the Buddhist Dharma-Chakra.

Hindu temples tower majestically at Patan

Durbar Square, the city's hub and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The impressive royal palace and a number of temples, including the Krishna Mandir temple constructed in the shikhara style, can be found in Patan Durbar Square. The Sanskrit Mahabharata, the Hindu epic text, is shown in abundance in the sculptures and carvings in this Hindu temple. Three floors make up the temple, each of which is devoted to a Hindu god like Shiva or Krishna.

The temple of the Mahabharata literary character Bhimsen is another significant temple in Patan Durbar Square.

The Shiva-dedicated temple of Vishwanath and the Taleju Bhawani, god of the Royal Malla family, are two more prominent structures housed inside the same complex.

The four temples were all constructed in the 1600s, but there are many more in the peculiar Patan region. Like the Kumbeshwar temple, which was constructed in 1392 in honor of Shiva by one of the Malla monarchs. Or Rato Machhendranath's temple, which



serves as a symbol of the fusion of the two civilizations and is revered by both Hindus and Buddhists.

The royal residential palace and the usual homes in the neighborhood are other examples of

Patan's beauty and legacy, which extends beyond the temples.

Sadly, the 2015 earthquake damaged numerous of these structures. Many of the devastated structures have been rebuilt thanks to various organizations and associations, including Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust.

As a traditional handicrafts hub, Patan is the ideal location to look into the reality of these tiny businesses. must comprehend their growth and operation because they are crucial to the country's historical and contemporary reality.

Even though Nepal has a subsistence economy that is mostly centered on agriculture, tourism is significant to the country's economy, particularly in terms of the buying of regional handicrafts.

The major types of handicrafts produced in Patan are thangkas, metalwork, and woodwork (but available everywhere in Nepal).

Many conversations and inquiries were done in order to comprehend the existing situation of the handicraft stores in Patan's cultural district.

The majority of the artisans in the area follow a generational heritage; in fact, craft skills are passed down from father to son.



Schools that educate how to make regional handicrafts have recently been founded, but they also serve the financially rewarding function of selling them to tourists.

Both domestic and foreign tourists purchase items from the workshops. Due to a lack of travelers, several small businesses have had financial difficulties after the 2015 earthquake and the arrival of COVID in 2019.

In actuality, tourism and handicrafts have a mutually beneficial relationship that impacts each other. Traditional goods draw tourists, while tourism enables local production to continue and maintain the tradition.

There are two main reasons why artisans chose Patan as their place of business. Of course, tourism comes first. The second is the local tradition of art and amanuensis. Although if not all artisans are from Patan, many do settle there in order to take advantage of the city's rich history in the field.

Because of this, Patan is officially referred to as a city of art.

She is an intern from Switzerland

PROYEL

# Engaging Youth

*Promotion of Youth Engagement in Local Government Process (PROYEL), a project funded by the European Union (EU) and carried out by Helvetas Nepal in close collaboration with local NGOs and Local Governments, has resulted noticeable changes in the Gurans Rural Municipality in the Dailekh area of the Karnali Province.*

By KESHAB POUDEL

On Tuesday, March 14 at around 11 a.m., at Gurans Rural Municipality's Office in Ranimatta, Dailekh District of Karnali province, a group of four youth were debating with Top Bahadur BC, Chairperson of Rural Municipality. The funding for youth-focused activities, involving them in the creation of policies through an internship, inclusiveness, gender equality, and programs promoting employment in the Rural Municipality were some of the themes covered.

While the youth leaders and chairman BC were

speaking, deputy chairperson Shiva Kumari Khadka and chief administrative officer Bam Bahadur KC were quietly listening.

Yam Bahadur BK, the president of the Gurans Rural Municipality Youth Panel, was joined at the discussion by three other female panelists from the Rural Municipality: Indira Pun Magar, Kalpana Khadka, and Maya Budha.



They talked about topics like ending child marriage and new initiatives to keep young people in the community, among other things.

Nonetheless, this gathering was official, structured, and focused on local-level governance issues. BK, a youth leader from Youth Panel, came to the municipality to talk about bigger issues. Once younger voters participate in periodical elections for the municipal, provincial, and federal legislature, no one is concerned about their larger agenda or makes an effort to address their difficulties.

Following the elections, a sizable number of





municipalities were well-organized and lively. They took place in front of Celestine Krossechell, Helvetas's Asia Continental Coordinator, Dr. Prabin Manandhdar, Helvetas-Nepal Country Director, Aagya Pokharel, PROYEL Project Coordinator, Helvetas Karnali Provincial Head Madan Raj Bhatta, and other officials.

“PROYEL assists us in building relationships with adolescents in a very short amount of time. Kids have become more interested in the municipal budget, services, and activities. To hold us accountable, this is a good indicator, according to deputy chairperson Shiva Kumari Khadka.

Celestine Krossechell, Helvetas's Asia Continental Coordinator, who had just flown in from Switzerland to inspect the projects, interrupted and questioned elected officials and Penal members about

young people left Gurans Rural Municipality for the neighboring nation, the Gulf, or Nepal's urban center in search of employment.

For local governments to be youth-friendly, young people must be included in the governance process. Youth participation and engagement are therefore given top emphasis by the European Union and Helvetas Nepal.

Changes are now occurring in small regions despite years of carelessness. Out of 753 local levels in Nepal, the PROYEL is encouraging youth to get involved at the municipality and ward level in five municipalities in the Karnali and three in the Madhesh Provinces, similar to how it does in the Gurans Rural Municipality.

Gurans Rural Municipal Youth Panel leader BK and his three other coworkers Indira Pun Magar, Kalpan Khadka, and Maya Budha exhibited their capacities and capability to negotiate with local-level

officials by attending training courses and programs under the initiative.

“More initiatives geared toward youth are something we expect. Despite a decline in child marriages, young people continue to migrate seasonally to surrounding provinces and neighboring countries,” said Indira Pun Magar, chair of the Ward No. 2 Youth Panel.

The interactions between the young people and the elected officials of rural





the engagement process.

Sunita Chand, the chairman of the Women Empowerment Action Forum (WEAF) Nepal, who has played a significant role in the implementation of the PROYEL at local government, constantly watched the program throughout.

Dr. Manandhar advised that the representatives from the Rural Municipality and the local implementing partner connect the youth panel with other youth-related employment-generating programs implemented by Helvetas.

Youths have led political and social transformation in the Gurans Rural Municipality, just as they have across the nation. The youth have been instrumental in reducing child marriage and Chaupadi.

They have also been actively participating in local politics.

Notwithstanding their role, Nepal's experiences have demonstrated that the youth's active participation in the local governance process im-

pacts the process of planning, priorities, and achievements. Deputy Chairman Khadka stated, "We have been working closely with the youth panel and assisting them to create the ward-level panel inclusive





Municipalities have played a key role in the delivery of public services since Nepal's federalization process was put into place, and they are in a unique position to create and implement a comprehensive response to regional development and humanitarian challenges.

"The PROYEL is seeking to establish a space to form a new set of connections and to give youth a voice and a chance in defining and engaging in the local government and development process," said Pokharel.

Helvetas' international activities place a strong emphasis on encouraging good governance, minimizing conflicts and the radicalization of youth, and promoting the positive effects of migration on development. PROYEL is a little effort, but if it is successful, a significant portion of Nepal's youth population will gain more from it.

and effective to impart their tasks bringing the young agenda from the ward to the municipal level.

Only if the local government formally acknowledges the role of youth and includes them in the local governance process will long-term progress be made to enhance service delivery to the most vulnerable populations and end the exclusion of women and disadvantaged communities in a rural municipality like Gurans.

"PROYEL's early experiences have demonstrated that young people can contribute effectively to attaining objectives like fostering open communication between local government and civil society. Such dialogue is scarce in rural towns despite the first elections taking place five years ago, according to Dr.

Manandhar.

PROYEL has already conducted a variety of leadership workshops and other procedural pieces of training, such as the digital literacy workshop. According to project coordinator Aagya Pokharel, they provide local youngsters with more influence. The project involves increasing co-operation and coordination among various stakeholders to engage youth.



# यौन हिंसाबाट बचौं र बचाऔं ।

- यौनजन्य हिंसा सामाजिक अपराध हो ।
- यस्तो हिंसा छिमेकी, आफन्त र नातेदारबाट समेत हुनसक्छ ।
- अभिभावकले आफ्ना छोराछोरीको व्यवहार ख्याल गरौं ।
- उनीहरूको चालचलन, बानी व्यवहारमा अस्वभाविक परिवर्तन आएको हुनसक्छ ।
- त्यस्तो पाइए तत्काल उनीहरूसँग कुरा गरौं ।
- बालबालिकालाई कुनै समस्या भए मन मिल्ने साथी वा अभिभावकलाई बताऔं ।



नेपाल सरकार  
विज्ञापन बोर्ड



सिन्धुपाल्चोक जिल्लामा निर्माणाधीन जिल्लाकै सबैभन्दा ठूलो मध्य भोटेकोशी जलविद्युत आयोजना निर्माण कार्यमा सम्बन्धित सबै पक्षले आ-आफ्नो स्थानबाट आवश्यक सहयोग पुऱ्याई ऊर्जासंकट समाधानको राष्ट्रिय अभियानमा सहभागी भइदिनु हुन हार्दिक अनुरोध गर्दछौं ।



मध्य भोटेकोशी जलविद्युत कम्पनी लि.,  
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