



**OPINION**  
Santa Bahadur Pun



**VIEWPOINT**  
Hemant Arjyal

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FORTNIGHTLY

## POWER SHORTAGE SCANDLE A Stunt To Rock NEA

### INSIDE



**KING CHARLE'S CORONATION**  
NEPAL'S CONNECTION



**ADB PORTFOLIO REVIEW**  
SLUGGISH PERFORMANCE NEW VISION



**INTERVIEW**  
KIKUTA YUTAKA

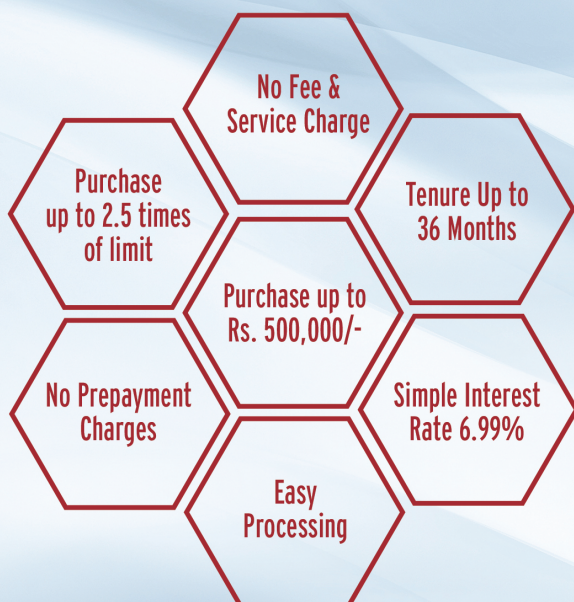


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**Notes From The Editor**



The Nepal-UK Treaty was signed in 2023, and just last month, the two countries celebrated their 100th anniversary. Even though Nepal and the UK kept a relatively low profile, the treaty is crucial for recognizing Nepal as an independent and sovereign country. Nepal received a different position under the treaty than other Princely States of India. The crowning of King Charles III, formerly known as The Prince of Wales, is a significant event for Nepalese as well because of the long-standing connection between the two countries and the popularity of British royals in Nepal. King Charles III has a warm relationship with the Nepalese people because he visited there when serving as Prince of Wales. Nepal, which has a strong sense of loyalty to the nation, has dispatched a team to the coronation, which is being led by Foreign Minister NP Saud. The coronation is seen by New Spotlight as a very significant day.

After prominent officials and political figures affiliated with the opposition CPN-UML were named in a warrant issued by the Nepal Police for allegedly providing fraudulent Bhutanese refugee certificates, violent conflicts between the two political parties in Nepal are expected. The Nepal Police have issued an arrest warrant for the Chief of the Commission of Investigation of Abuse of Authority, the former home secretary, and the former minister due to their involvement in the case.

The event will probably take center stage during the House of Representatives Budget Session because the president had called for it. However, we have chosen to use MD Kul Man Ghising's politically driven agitation and the suspension of the electricity supply as our cover story. By making every attempt to improve Nepal's power supply system, MD Ghising establishes himself as a successful leader of the largest public utility. We have attempted to investigate why certain interest groups are opposed to MD Ghising.

**Keshab Poudel**

Editor



# CONTENT

## KING CHARLE'S COROBINATION

Nepal's Connection 3

NEWSNOTES 4

BUSINESS BRIEF 8

OPINION  
Santa Bahadur Pun 10

INTERVIEW  
Kikuta Yutaka 14

VIEWPOINT  
Hemant Arjyal 18

ADB PORTFOLIO REVIEW  
Sluggish Performance New Vision 22

NEUFF  
Safeguarding Human Rights 29

FAO-NEPAL  
Agri Tech 30

ENVIRONMENTAL PEACEBUILDING  
Experiences in Nepal 32



COVERSTORY: POWER SHORTAGE SCANDLE : A Stunt To Rock NEA

24



100 YEARS OF THE : Nepal-UK Treaty

12



IMPORT OF PETROL : Declines 26 Percent

20



## KING CHARLE'S CORONATION

# Nepal's Connection

*King Charles III and British Prime Minister Sunak met with Foreign Minister Saud in London*

By A CORRESPONDENT

As the first Nepali politician to meet King Charles III and British Prime Minister Sunak in London, Foreign Minister NP Saud, a young NC leader from Sudurpaschim, has reason to celebrate his political career.

Even though their encounter at the reception was brief, King Charles III may have thought back to his trip to Nepal when speaking with Foreign Minister Saud.

This encounter is significant because it serves as a reminder of the two nations' long-standing ties as Nepal and England commemorate the 100th anniversary of their 1924 treaty. At the King's reception held for the foreign delegates at Buckingham Palace last evening, the Minister for Foreign Affairs N.P. Saud had the opportunity to meet King Charles III and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Rishi Sunak.

Narayan Prakash Saud, the minister of foreign affairs, was present at Westminster Abbey for the corona-



tion of His Majesty King Charles III and Her Majesty Queen Camilla.

Meanwhile, words of congratulations were extended to His Majesty King Charles III on His Majesty's Coronation as the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland by President Ramchandra Paudel and Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' today.

In his message, President has mentioned about the valuable works of His Majesty in the past as the Prince of Wales on important global agendas such as environment conservation

and sustainable development.

The President has also recalled His Majesty's connection with Nepal which was demonstrated by the number of visits His Majesty paid to Nepal as the Prince. Highlighting the long-standing friendship between Nepal and the United Kingdom, the President has stated that the spheres of cooperation between the two countries have been growing over the years to encompass multiple areas of mutual interest.

In a separate message, Prime Minister has extended congratulations and best wishes to His Majesty King Charles III on behalf of the people and Government of Nepal. The Prime Minister has recalled the kind personal gesture from His Majesty when Nepal faced the devastation of the 2015 earthquakes. Mentioning that this year marked the centenary of Nepal-UK Friendship Treaty of 1923, the Prime Minister has stated that the relations between the two countries are characterized by goodwill, mutual respect and cooperation.





## NEWSNOTES

### EU Ambassador Deprez Stresses The Need To Collectively Nurture The Universal Declaration Of Human Rights

Ambassador of European Union To Nepal Nona Deprez delivered a lecture on 'Celebrating Human Rights for all' at the Mid-Western University, Surkhet to mark the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights globally observed throughout 2023 recently.

Addressing the program she said that all of us collectively



need to nurture the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Inter-acting with the law students of

Mid-western University Surkhet, she said, "we collectively need to nurture the Universal Declaration of Human Rights because policies grounded in human rights always shape greater justice, equity and dignity. She said human rights are integral part of EU's policies and programs," tweets EU In Nepal.

Ambassador Deprez and law students at the Mid-Western University also discussed about different human rights issues & agreed that continuity of dialogue is of great importance to actively protect and promote human rights instead of leaving it up to other organizations to address the issues.

Ambassador Deprez has been visiting Karnali Province attending various programs. She also attended the 2nd round of the Nepal European Union Film Festival is starting at the Mid-Western University from 3rd May & will continue till 5th May following successful completion of the 1st round in Mahendranagar. All are welcome.

### Maggie Dayne's Book Between The Mountain And The Sky Released In Kathmandu.

Ambica Shrestha, highly regarded women entrepreneur and President of Dwarika's Group of Hotel and Resorts, Bina Pradhan, a social worker, and Maggie Doyne, author of the book, launched the book *Between the Mountain and Sky* at The Dwarika's Hotel.

*Between the Mountain and the Sky: South Asian Edition* was released by Maggie Dayne, CNN Hero (2015), who constructs a children's home, a women's center, and operates the Kopila Valley School, which serves 700 children and 1000 women from the most impoverished communities in Surkhet.

Speaking at the event, Janak Das-Kanch Maiya

Foundation Chairperson Shrestha stated that Maggie Doyne is a great lady who has greatly contributed to the education of impoverished and needy children in the Karnali region. She stated that the book depicts the author's effort and challenges.

Maggie Doyne, according to Shrestha, is a wonderful young lady who spent her youth serving the needy and providing educational opportunities.

Indira Rana Magar, Vice Chairman of the House of Representatives, Sangita Shrestha Einhaus, Owner, Managing Director, and Developer of Dwarika's Group of Hotels and Resorts, diplomats, and people from many walks of life were there..

Maggie Doyne discussed the book and thanked Ambica Shrestha for her assistance in her endeavor. She stated that Ambica Shrestha is an inspiration to all women.

Maggie noted, highlighting a section of the book, that this book is about the suffering and optimism of people living in Nepal's remote region. She described how terrible and difficult life is for people living in the Karnali region, which includes Jumla, Humla, Kalikot, and Mugu.

Maggie, co-founder of the BlinkNow Foundation and the Kopila Valley Children's House and School in Surkhet, has educated over 800 pupils from the region.

Bina Pradhan proposed a vote of gratitude, describing Maggie as a Nepali daughter. She stated that one

does not have to be born in a specific nation to be a daughter or son. Bina Pradhan stated that



Maggie, despite being born in the United States, is a true Nepalese daughter.

### Statues Of Nritya Devi And Standing Buddha Is Returning To Nepal

The Embassy of Nepal sent an 8th century standing stone statue of Lord Buddha and a 10th century wooden statue of Nritya Devi to the Department of Archaeology of the Government of Nepal. Honorary Consul General of Nepal in San Diego Rishi Punnakhar Dhakal sponsored the shipping of these statues.

According to a press release issued by the Embassy of Nepal in United States, the statue of Nritya Devi was returned to the Embassy by a private collector. Likewise, a statue of standing Buddha was returned to the Embassy by





Hollywood producer Mr. Michael Phillips. Dhakal, on behalf of the Embassy, received the statue of Lord Buddha from Phillips in Los Angeles on April 12, 2023.

Originally, the statue of Nritya Devi was located at Itum Bahal, Lalitpur, and the statue of Lord Buddha was from Machhindra Bahal, Bugmati, Lalitpur. Both of these statues were stolen from Nepal in the 1970s and ended up with the private art collectors after passing through various hands.

The Embassy extends its sincere gratitude to Michael Phillips for returning the standing stone statue of Lord Buddha to the Government of Nepal. Similarly, the Embassy expresses its special thanks to Honorary Consul General Rishi Punnakhar Dhakal for sponsoring the shipping of the statues to Nepal.

As part of its efforts to recover and repatriate the lost and stolen heritages of Nepal, the Embassy has been actively engaged with the relevant agencies of government of Nepal and the United States, art researchers, heritage recovery campaigners, media and private individuals. The Embassy expresses its sincere thanks to all these agencies and individuals in these efforts.

Along with these two statues, the Embassy has been able to send altogether seven artifacts to Nepal within a period of a year.

## Norwegian Ambassador Paid A Courtesy Call On Foreign Minister

Norwegian Ambassador to Nepal Torun Dramdal paid a courtesy call on Minister for Foreign Affairs NP Saud.



They discussed various matters of bilateral and multilateral cooperation were discussed during the meeting.

## Dr. Joelle Hivonnet, Deputy Head of the European Delegation to Nepal, Interacted With Students At The Far Western University

Dr. Joelle Hivonne, Deputy Head of the European Delegation to Nepal, opened the first phase of the Nepal European Union Film Festival (NEUFF) with the subject 'Celebrating Human Rights for All' at the Far-Western University in Mahendranagar on Thursday (28 April) during an event.

Dr. Hivonnet also spoke with students at the far western university about the historic acceptance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and its critical role in bringing nations together to collectively defend human rights.

"Dr. Hivonnet said the Europe in Nepal has chosen 'Celebrating Human Rights for All' as the theme for this year's Nepal European Union Film Festival, which is being opened at the Far Western University in Mahendranagar with a goal to highlight the role of film in protecting human rights," EU in Nepal tweets.



It will be held in Mahendranagar through the 30th of April.

This is the 12th edition of Nepal European Union Film Festival. The festival will then travel to Surkhet where the second part of the festival will continue from 3rd May to 5th May at the Mid-Western University followed by the final round of screening taking place in Kathmandu from 12th to 15th May at the hall of Film Development Board in Chabahil.

Eight European films directed by some well-known directors as well as eight Nepali short films produced by young Nepali film producers will be screened during the festivals in the far-west and mid-west Nepal and Kathmandu.

Apart from the film screenings, the EU in Nepal will also organise side events focusing on the topic 'the role of films in promoting human Rights' which will be moderated by Pratistha Koirala, a communication and human



## NEWSNOTES

rights expert. This side event will also have a guest speaker from Europe, Stanislas Ide, a freelancer who has been writing on films.

### UN Resident Coordinator Calls On Foreign Minister NP Saud

UN Resident Coordinator in Nepal Hanna Singer-Hamdy paid a courtesy call on Hon Foreign Minister NP Saud.

During the meeting, various matters concerning UN-Nepal partnership, including Nepal's graduation from LDC status were discussed during the meeting.

"A wonderful meeting with Hon Foreign Minister NP Saud & MFA colleagues .exciting times for @UN\_Nepal partnership," tweets Hanaa Singer-Hamdy.

### Dr. Kedar Bhakta Mathema Was Awarded A Japanese Decoration By Japan

Kikuta Yutaka, Ambassador of Japan to Nepal, handed Dr. Kedar Bhakta Mathema, former Ambassador of Nepal to Japan, the 2022 Spring Imperial Decoration, Order of Japan (the Order of Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star).



Dr. Mathema received the decoration on April 29, 2022, in recognition of his contributions to strengthening bilateral relations and promoting friendship between Japan and Nepal as an Ambassador.

During his tenure from 1996 to 2003, Dr. Mathema accomplished many high-level exchanges from Nepal to Japan. In particular, the visits of Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala in 1998 and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Dipendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev in 2001 were very important in the history of the bilateral relations.

Prime Minister Koirala was the first democratically elected Nepali leader who visited Japan after the establishment of the diplomatic relationship between Japan and Nepal.

On the heels of his visit, Mori Yoshiro, then Prime Minister of Japan, visited Kathmandu in 2000, as the first Japanese prime minister who officially visited Nepal. Japanese Decorations are conferred upon foreigners twice a



year, on 29th April and 3rd November, concurrently with the conferment of decorations and medals to Japanese nationals.

The Order of the Rising Sun is bestowed upon individuals of merit, in recognition of their outstanding contributions to the nation or public. This is also conferred upon foreign nationals who have made notable contributions to the promotion of relations between Japan and other countries in areas such as politics and diplomacy, research and education, medicine and social welfare, economy and industry, and culture and sports.

### Nepal And United Kingdom To Take Stock Nepal-UK Engagements

Foreign secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal will led Nepali delegation for the 6th meeting of Nepal-United Kingdom Bilateral Consultation Mechanism (BCM) which will be held in London.

According to a press release issued by Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the meeting will take stock of the diverse areas of Nepal-UK engagements including development partnership and climate cooperation, trade and investment, education, tourism and other aspects of people-to-people connection, and British Gurkha, among other matters

For the meeting, the Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal is leading a Nepali delegation which includes sen-





ior officials of the Government of Nepal. This year marks the centenary of the Friendship Treaty between Nepal and the United Kingdom. The Foreign Secretary will also be engaged in other official meetings and programs.

### U.S. Ambassador To Nepal Thompson Opened GrowByData's Office In Kathmandu

U.S. Ambassador to Nepal Dean R Thompson inaugurated GrowByData Services new office in Nepal on 24th of April. Following inauguration, the ambassador also toured the new workspace and interacted with team members and partners.

"GrowByData, a Boston and Kathmandu based marketing intelligence firm, is excited to announce opening of its new office in Sanepa," according to a press release.

The new building is designed to enhance reliability



ity and promote cross-team collaboration as the firm continues to grow and provide an exceptional experience for marketing leaders at blue chip clients.

The ribbon cutting will be attended by his excellency US Ambassador Dean R Thompson, followed by

"Marketing leaders are overwhelmed with data today. We aspire to be the marketing intelligence partner of the top marketing firms by offering them novel insights and services that break silos to support them craft new strategies. The opening of GrowByData's new office marks our investment to support the importance of cross-team collaboration across engineering, customer success, and marketing to offer industry-leading insights across the evolving digital media landscape to our blue-chip clients," highlights Managing Partner Prasanna Dhungel.

"In 2014, GrowByData began with a team of 5 members from a one-room shared office space in Naxal. Looking back, we have come a long way with a strong team of 100 plus working from our Boston and Kathmandu offices. We started serving just one client in 2014 and now are collaborating with over 100 brands through half a dozen agencies. We are delighted and proud to have contributed to both economies in the US and Nepal along with many CSR programs to support the local community," stated Subin

Shrestha, the VP of Operations.

Founded in 2014, GrowByData specializes in providing novel insights to marketing leaders, enabling reporting of Share of Voice, Pricing, Promotions, Customer Reviews, Competitive Dynamics, and other digital shopper attributes. The firm has successfully served global advertising agencies and their household brand clients. Please visit [www.GrowByData.com](http://www.GrowByData.com) for more information.

### Former Minister Dr Rijal Provides Rs 5 Million In Donation

Nepali Congress leader and former minister Dr Minendra Rijal has provided Rs 5 million in donation for the recently-established hospital in Damak city by the Kathmandu Institute of Child Health.

Dr Rijal handed over a bank cheque to the Institute's Chairman, Dr Bhagawan Koirala, on behalf of Punyashree Foundation setup in memory of Rijal's parents.

Dr Rijal made the donation at the presence of Mayor of Ratuwamai Municipality Narendra Prasad Singh and Officiating Mayor of Damak Municipality Bhim Prasad Poudel.

On the occasion, Dr Rijal said that he made voluntary assistance to the child hospital adding that the contributions made for the society would help make a bright future of the upcoming generation.

During the event, Dr Koirala stated that one each



specialized hospital would be opened targeting the children and support the government's target to reduce the child mortality rate.

The hospital is being run in cooperation with Nepal Red Cross Society, Damak chapter, and specialist services are being provided for the treatment of children. (RSS)



## BUSINESS BRIEF

### NRB Awarded Himalayan Bank Ltd As A Bank With The Highest Inward Remittances

NRB Governor Maha Prasad Adhikari handed over the recognition letter of appreciation to Ashoke SJB Rana, chief executive officer of HBL, as per a media release.

Amid a function of NRB's 68th anniversary, governor Adhikari handed over the award to Chief Executive Officer of the Himalayan Bank Ltd. Ashaoke S.J.B Rana.

"Received an Award from Nepal Rastra Bank for being the bank with the highest inward remittances. Congratulations to the Himal Remit team," tweets Rana.

Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) has honored Himalayan Bank Ltd (HBL) for being able to channelize the highest volume of inward remittance among all the commercial banks amidst a ceremony organized on the occasion of 68th anniversary of NRB.

The bank has been able to channelize in 16.90 per cent of the total inward remittance brought into the country in the fiscal year 2022-23. After establishing Himal Remit, online money transfer service, the bank has been in the forefront in remittance service since last two decades catering customers as per time and need.

The bank with a premium online customer focused and technology-oriented money transfer product, Himal Remit has been serving its customers with more than 125 corresponding networks across the world.

### Binayak Shah Elected President Of HAN

Binayak Shah has been unanimously elected the President of the Hotel Association Nepal (HAN). The 48th annual general meeting of the Association elected a new working committee under Shah's leadership.

Shah is proprietor of Airport Hotel. He was HAN's first Vice-President. Similarly, Prabin Bahadur Pandey has been elected first Vice-President, Binay Tuladhar second Vice-President, Sajan Shakya General Secretary and Yubraj Shrestha Treasurer of the Association.



Bidhita Shrestha, Jaydin Shrestha, Sarik Ahmad Lari, Binod Shankar Shrestha, Dinesh Shrestha, Bishal Kumar Kaith, Rajendra Bhatta, Ram Kumar Puri, Thakur Prasad Pokhrel, Laxman Aryal, Biplav Poudel, Gopal Rana, Rajan Shrestha and Suman Ghimire are the members of the new working

committee.

### SKBBL And NACCFL Honored Awards For Their Performance

Sana Kisan Bikas Laghubitta Bittiyasanstha Ltd. (SKBBL) (Small Farmer Development Microfinance Financial Institution) and NACCFL were honored award this week from two famous worldwide organizations for their efforts to effectively providing financial services to small and marginalized farmers. Chairperson and General Manager of NACCFL Received Award from FAO

Nepal Agriculture Cooperative Central Federation Ltd. (NACCFL), the central Federation of Small Farmer Agriculture Cooperatives Ltd. (SFACLs), has been awarded a Partnership Award by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on April 24, 2023. The NACCFL has received this award for its outstanding work in institutional development, good governance, and capacity building of small-holder farmer cooperatives.

Similarly, the Rural Enterprise Financing Project performed by SKBBL got the Asian Development Bank's Best Project Management Team Award on April 21, 2023.

SKBBL's exceptional services have been recognized on numerous occasions. On April 21, 2023, the Asian Development Bank awarded SKBBL's Rural Enterprise Financing Project the Best Project Management Team Award.

On July 6, 2001, Sana Kisan Bikas Laghubitta Bittiyasanstha Ltd. (SKBBL) (Small Farmer Development Microfinance Financial Institution) was created and incorporated under the

then Company Act. To promote financial inclusion in the country, it provides wholesale loan and technical support services to Small Farmer Agriculture Cooperatives Ltd. (SFACLs) and comparable other Microfinance Institutions (MFIs). In collaboration with SFACLs, it also provides other credit plus services to communities for social empowerment and poverty eradication.

SKBBL's vision is to be a leading, financially viable wholesale microfinance institution mostly owned by SFACLs committed to building rural communities via collaboration with partner cooperatives. In accordance with its objective, SKBBL provides quality financial services as well as technical assistance to the disadvantaged, marginal small farmers, and small and medium entrepreneurs through partnerships with dynamic and sustainable partner cooperatives.

SKBBL services had reached over one million homes in 76 districts and 546 local municipalities as of January 2023. The SKBBL method combining financial and non-financial services is regarded as one of the most effective and long-term poverty-reduction programs.

In 2003, SKBBL received a USD 50,000 Pro-Poor In-





novation Challenge Award from CGAP/World Bank to establish a revolving fund for the replication of SFACs in Nepal's rural areas in order to increase financial inclusion.

SKBBL was also named "Best Managed Microfinance Development Bank" in 2014. Furthermore, the Rural Enterprise Financing Project managed by SKBBL has been recognized by the Ministry of Finance and the Asian Development Bank for excellent work in 2020 during the COVID Pandemic.

### **World Bank Approves \$100 Million To Strengthen Nepal's Healthcare System**

The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors today approved \$100 million in financing for the Nepal Quality Health Systems Program operation.



The Program will improve the quality of healthcare services and increase the coverage of health insurance, and enhance the capacity of the healthcare system to prepare for and respond to

health emergencies in Koshi and Gandaki provinces.

"By prioritizing and investing in health, Nepal can reap multiple benefits including improved health outcomes, increased productivity, and economic growth," said Faris Hadad-Zervos, World Bank Country Director for Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. "The World Bank supports Nepal's goal to put quality at the core of health system policy and planning and service delivery."

The Program will be implemented by the Ministry of Health and Population with the coordination of the Health Insurance Board at the federal level, and provincial and local governments in Koshi and Gandaki provinces to help achieve the strategic objectives of Nepal's Health Sector Strategic Plan, 2022-2030. These include enhancing efficiency and responsiveness of the health system, promoting sustainable financing and social protection in health, and promoting equitable access to quality health services.

"The Program supports the implementation of federalism and builds on Nepal's first Program for Results in the health sector to address the challenges of access and quality and to build a resilient public health sector," said Dr. Feng Zhao, Practice Manager for Health, Nutrition and Population, South Asia Region. "The results achieved under this Program have the potential for scale-up to other provinces."

The financing for the Program is complemented by a \$3.84 million grant from the Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (HEPR) Trust Fund. The HEPR Trust Fund supports eligible countries and territories to improve their capacities to prepare, prevent, respond, and mitigate the impact of epidemics on populations.

### **Aloft Kathmandu's Partnership Program**

Aloft Kathmandu Thamel has partnered with the Charles Baudelaire Institute and Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management (NATHM) to offer internships to French students from Lycée Hôtelier Savoie Léman of Thonon-les Bains.

This program is possibly the first-of-its-kind in Nepal and aims to provide culturally immersive professional experiences and

promote the exposure of Nepali students to the international competitive and creative contexts, as per a press statement.

The students will stay for approximately three months during their internship period in Nepal, where

they will receive valuable experience from different departments and learn about Nepali working culture and hospitality.



### **Air Works India To Provide Aviation Repair and Maintenance Service At TIA**

Air Works, India's largest independent aviation maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) company, has joined hands with Siris Aircraft Maintenance Repair and Overhaul Pvt Ltd (SAMRO) to provide line maintenance services to international carriers at Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA).

Commenting on its SAARC expansion, D Anand Bhaskar, managing director and CEO of Air Works Group, said, "For long, our key international customers had been requesting us to expand our services footprint in the region and today we are extremely happy to have been able to take this first step in association with Siris Aircraft MRO."

The development is also well-timed from a market perspective, given the strong revival in air traffic and the enhancement of aviation infrastructure in Nepal. We believe that this launch could lay the foundation for expanding the scope of our current collaboration with Siris to other airports and other operators in Nepal, which could eventually lead to an enhancement in the scope of services beyond the current transit/ daily/ weekly checks."

"Currently, over 30 leading international airlines fly to/ from Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA) to more than 45 destinations throughout Asia and the Middle East. Even as Gautam Buddha International Airport (GBIA) - Nepal's second major airport - began international operations last year,

Tribhuvan International Airport continues to be the country's hub for international carriers. As part of the agreement, Air



Works would be extending its entire gamut of approvals covering Boeing (737/767/777/787 family), Airbus (319/320/321/330/350 family), and ATR 42/72 (500/600) aircraft to the new station. The new venture has already roped in a leading Middle Eastern airline as its first customer.

# A Short History Of The 300/900 MW Upper Karnali Hydroelectric Project



BY: SANTA BAHADUR PUN

Our Supreme Court is presently hearing the writ petition of Ratan Bhandari on the recent two year financial closure extension given to GMR Energy by the Investment Board of Nepal (IBN) for the construction of the 300/900 MW Upper Karnali Hydroelectric Project. As this Upper Karnali Project story started 17 years ago in 2006 and still ongoing in 2023, the following main historical points are being highlighted for those interested in it:

- 2006 – Water Resources Minister, **Gyanendra Bahadur Karki**, tenders out for global bidding three projects: two run-of-river projects **300 MW Upper Karnali and 402 MW Arun III** and the third **Storage 600 MW Budhi Gandaki**;
- Ex-Finance Secretary **Bhanu Prasad Acharya**-led seven member Evaluation Committee (Lekhman Sing Bhandari/NEA Board member and ex-DG/DOED, Rajendra Kishore Chetri/Executive Director-WECS, Krishna Hari Banskota/Joint Secretary-MOF, Arjun Kumar Karki/MD-NEA, Sunil Bahadur Malla/SE-DOED and Anup Kumar Upadhaya/Joint Secretary-MOWR) rejected the two bidders (India's Maytas and China's Sinohydro) for 600 MW Storage Budhi Gandaki and recommended **GMR Energy for both the 300 MW Upper Karnali and 402 MW Arun III**;
- Fortunately, the **Parliament's Subcommittee on Natural Resources and Means** directed that only one project be awarded to one developer. Though **GMR Energy** insisted that it could develop both the Projects, it chose the **300 MW Upper Karnali** and the **402 MW Arun III** went to the next best evaluated bidder, **Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam** – a

Government of India undertaking;

- 2008 – Joint Secretary **Anup Kumar Upadhaya**, who led the four member Committee (Rajendra Kishore Chetri/Joint Secretary-WECS, Sunil Bahadur Malla/DDG-DOED and Uttar Kumar Shrestha/DMD-NEA), signed the agreement with GMR Energy to commission the 300 MW Upper Karnali **within 84 months** – 30 months for survey license and 54 months for construction i.e commissioning by 2015;
- 2009 – Energy Minister, **Dr. Prakash Saran Mahat**, approves the upgrading of 300 MW Upper Karnali to 900 MW;
- 2011 – Investment Board of Nepal established, headed by **Radhes Pant** and later as all hydro-power projects over **500 MW handed over to Investment Board**, GMR Energy's 900 MW Upper Karnali falls under the mandate of Investment Board;
- 2014 – Making Void the agreement GMR Energy had signed with Joint Secretary Anup Kumar Upadhaya in 2008, Investment Board of Nepal signs the **Project Development Agreement (PDA)** with GMR Energy giving a two year term for Financial Closure;
- During this period, Investment Board organized at its office an interaction with various stakeholders like the Independent Power Producers of Nepal (IPPN), governmental and non-governmental bodies where the Irrigation Ministry dropped the bombshell: ***the 900 MW four hour peaking operation of Upper Karnali without the Re-regulating Dam will have Adverse Impact Downstream to Nepal's irrigation systems particularly to 11,000***



*ha of Rani Jamara Kulariya Project!*

- When the two year License for Financial Closure expired in 2016, three more one year extensions were given till 2018. **Radhes Pant's** term at IBN also expires and **Mahaprasad Adhikari** takes over;
- From **2018 to 2021 GMR Energy had no license at all** as no extension was given;
- 2022 March 28 (2078 Chaitra 14) – The Review Committee led by **Bishwanath Paudel, Vice-Chairman of NPC** (other members: *Madhukumar Marasini, Secretary/MOF; Debendra Karki, Secretary/Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation; Udayaraj Sapkota, Secretary/ Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs; Sushil Bhatta, CEO/ IBN; Radhes Pant, appointed by Coordinator and Bhagwan Aryal, member secretary, Joint Secretary IBN*) recommends a two year extension for Financial Closure to GMR Energy.



It is in this context of two year Financial Closure extension to GMR Energy that Ratan Bhandari's writ at Supreme Court is being heard. We, the Nepalese, question why Upper Karnali with a mere **2.4 Km headrace tunnel** has not been able to complete its **Financial Closure for 17 long years** while the **Arun III with 11.7 km tunnel** is about to be commissioned in 2023-24:

- The Kathmandu Post, February 28, 2022** headlined **India's SJVN signs paper to get Rs 101 Billion loan for Arun-3 Hydro Project** and reported the following: *SJVN Chairman and Managing Director Nand Lal Sharma reaffirmed SJVN's commitment to complete the construction of 900MW Arun-3 hydropower project in Ne*

*pal by the fiscal year 2023-24, one year ahead of the scheduled commissioning of the project in February 2025, as required under Project Development Agreement and Financing Documents.*

- 456 MW Upper Tamakoshi** was licensed to NEA in 2007, about a year earlier to GMR Energy. Financed entirely through Nepal's own resources, with a lengthy **8.4 Km head race tunnel and another lengthy 68 Km access road** (Charikot–Lamabagar), Upper

Tamakoshi started **commercial operation on 22nd August 2021**, despite the disruption by the massive 7.8 Richter scale earthquake of 2015 and the 5 months India-imposed embargo.

With the argument that GMR Energy would sell 500 MW power to Bangladesh, a two year license

extension has been given. Upper Karnali is in West Nepal and to transfer this 500 MW through India's Northern then Eastern Grids into Bangladesh is quite a troublesome '*wheeling task*'. GMR Energy can easily sell this 500 MW power in its own hungry Northern Grid. But to get the ears of Nepalese decision makers, Bangladesh has been brought up as the '*dekhaune dant*'. This is all because GMR Energy has done nothing in the past 17 years while the two above mentioned Projects (that were licensed about the same time), Upper Tamakoshi is already commissioned and Arun III in the process of commissioning within a year. It is the responsibility of the Investment Board to tell the Nepalese people why GMR Energy has been given another 2 year extension for Financial Closure!

# Nepal-UK Treaty

*Nepal and the UK commemorate the 100th anniversary of their treaty in London in the presence of foreign secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal.*

By A CORRESPONDENT

The commemoration of the treaty's 100th anniversary is a significant milestone for both nations. The recent celebration of the 100th anniversary of the signing of the 1923 treaty between Nepal and the United Kingdom in London was organized by Nepal and the United Kingdom.

One of the main parts of the treaty was that it recognized Nepal as an independent and sovereign country to conduct foreign policy and decide defense matters. Although there are certain restrictions, the treaty termed two countries equal and sovereign. This was what then prime minister Chandra Shumsher aspired for

It will never be common for a carrier diplomat to be present at significant historical events. It gives him or her great pride to represent Nepal as the principal guest on such a momentous occasion. Bharat Raj Paudyal, the foreign secretary, recognized this opening.

Foreign Secretary Paudyal made this past week in London, and this week, foreign minister NP Saud will also have the historic opportunity to attend King Charles III's coronation.

Recently, an exhibition was put on by the British Library, the Nepalese Embassy in London, and the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office to mark the 100th anniversary of the Nepal-UK Friendship Treaty.

At the exhibition hosted at the Library, historical records, manuscripts, pictures, philatelic items, and other historical objects linked to Nepal-UK connections were on show.

The friendship treaty, signed in 1923, served as a basis on which the relationship between Nepal and the UK developed, according to a statement released by the Nepali Embassy in the UK. Secretary in the Ministry



of Foreign Affairs Bharat Raj Paudyal addressed at the event. He said that the two countries bilateral ties had grown to include development partnerships, trade and investment, tourism, British Gurkhas, and inter-ethnic ties, as well as collaboration in multilateral fora on issues of shared interest.

Paudyal was grateful for the British Library's assistance in conserving, safeguarding, and digitizing historical documents, images, books, and other priceless items in Nepal.

According to a press release from the embassy, the United Kingdom will continue to support Nepal in achieving sustainable economic development and in moving out of the category of least developed countries. This statement was made by the Minister of State in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office of the UK, Anne-Marie Trevelyan.

In honor of the 100th anniversary of the Nepal-United Kingdom Treaty of Friendship, the Foreign,

Commonwealth and Development Office of the United Kingdom and the Embassy of Nepal in London organized an exhibition and reception at the British Library that evening, April 25, 2023.

During the event, historical records, manuscripts, pictures, philatelic items, and other artifacts linked to Nepal and the relationship between Nepal and the UK were displayed.

Bharat Raj Paudyal, the foreign secretary, spoke at the event and emphasized how the 1923 Friendship Treaty laid the groundwork for the development of the Nepal-UK relationship during the previous 100 years.

According to the Foreign Secretary, these ties have greatly broadened in recent years to include cooperation on issues of shared interest in multilateral fora, development partnerships, trade and investment, tourism, the British Gurkhas in the diaspora, and other people-to-people ties. He was grateful for the help the Brit-



ish Library has given in Nepal in saving, guarding, and digitizing historical manuscripts, photos, monographs, and other priceless items.

According to a press release from the Embassy of Nepal in London, Ms. Anne-Marie Trevelyan, Minister of State in the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office of the United Kingdom, said that the country would continue to assist Nepal in achieving sustainable economic development and shedding its designation as a least developed country, including through priority areas of trade and investment.

Gyan Chandra Acharya, the ambassador of Nepal to the UK, and Xerxes Mazda, the head of the British Library's collections, both spoke at the event.

The Nepal-Britain Treaty was originally debated in 1921, and it was officially signed in Singha Durbar on December 21, 1923. The pact, which was hailed as "a great achievement of Chandra Shumsher's diplomacy's 25 years," was the British government's first official admission that Nepal, as an independent country, had the right to conduct its foreign policy however it saw proper. The League of Nations noted the accord in 1925. The degree of Nepal's independence had been rendered irrelevant by the Sugauli Treaty of 1816. The treaty's sixth, seventh,



and eighth points were same.

Nepal and the United Kingdom have been traveling together for more than 200 years, sharing worries and offering support when things become tough. British East India Company recognized Nepal's status as a nation freed from Chinese suzerainty imposed upon it after signing the 1793 treaty by formally signing the 1816 treaty.

According to former foreign secretary professor Bishwa Pradhan, with a few exceptions, the 1923 pact continued the terms of the 1816 treaty.

Pradhan claims that the 1923 treaty sets Nepal apart from other Princely States of India in his book *Diplomatic Strategy for Nepal*. However, the majority of the pact's wording was lifted verbatim from a treaty from 1816. He also believes that numerous articles from the 1923 pact were completely copied into the 1950 accords between India and Nepal.

Whatever significance the 1923 contract between Nepal and the UK may have had in terms of its text and spirit, it handed Nepal its independence. The country must commemorate the treaty's centennial signing.

The purpose of the treaty, according to Kanchanmoy Mojumdar's book *Political Relations Between India and Nepal*, is to formally implement the treaty of 1816 between states. According to Mojumdar, the pact was written to guarantee Chandra Sumsher's demand that he demonstrate his uniqueness from other British Princely states.

Whatever the debates over the 1923 treaty, it has historical significance that the two nations are honoring its signing 100 years later.



## Nepali People Have Always Had A Strong Affinity And Interest In Japan: Japanese Ambassador KIKUTA YUTAKA

Ambassador of Japan to Nepal **KIKUTA YUTAKA** is a career diplomat of Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Experienced diplomat, Kikuta worked as part of Japanese missions in several countries including Thailand and the Netherlands. Prior to coming to Nepal, he also served as Japanese ambassador for Nigeria. He also served as the deputy chief of mission for Bhutan and India in 2015. **NEW SPOTLIGHT** reproduced his interview recently published in Look Nepal Magazine. Excerpts:

### **What is the role of the Japanese Monarch in the administration of the government and in public life in Japan?**

Japan's Constitution stipulates that His Majesty the Emperor is the symbol of Japan and the symbol of the unity of the Japanese people. The Emperor performs only acts provided for in the Constitution and has no political role.

During my career, I have the privilege of serving as a Chamberlain to His Majesty the Emperor. I felt on my skin at the Imperial Household Agency that His Majesty prays for the prosperity of the nation, the well-being of the people, and world peace 365 days a year, rain or shine, even though it is not widely publicized.

The Japanese Imperial Family enjoyed a long and close relationship with the Royal Family of Nepal in the past. Their Majesties the Emperor Emeritus and Empress Emeriti visited Nepal twice as Crown Prince and Crown Princess, in 1960 and 1975. The visit in 1975 was to attend the coronation of His Majesty King Birendra. A couple of Himalayan cedars planted then by Their Majesties have grown tall at my residence in Kathmandu, giving me the sense of responsibility as the Ambassador of Japan to this fascinating country every morning.

His Majesty the current Emperor also visited Nepal in 1987 as Crown Prince. As His Majesty loves mountaineering ("trekking" in this country), he visited Pokhara, took photos of Mt. Machhapuchhre and women drawing water at Sarangkot. This made the start for His Majesty to get involved in the water problem of the world.

Furthermore, in 1997, His Imperial Highness Prince Akishino inaugurated the Buddhist pavilion at the National Museum of Nepal in Kathmandu, which was expanded with Japan's financial support. In this way, the Imperial Family of Japan has close relations with Nepal.

Just as Nepal uses the Bikram Sambat calendar, Japan has its own tradition, in which the name of era changes with each reign of the Emperor. "Reiwa",

the current era, began in 2019 A.D., or 2076 in Bikram Sambat, and means "Beautiful Harmony". At the beginning of "Reiwa," the Right Honorable Mrs. Bidya Devi Bhandari, President of Nepal, visited Japan and attend the Ceremonies of the Accession to the Throne of the Emperor. It was a historic event for both countries as the first Nepali President under the new constitution celebrated the new Japanese Emperor on his enthronement.

### **Your Excellency, how do you evaluate Nepal-Japan relations since the day of its establishment?**

Official diplomatic relationship between Japan and Nepal was established in 1956, the year a Japanese climbing party became the first in the world to summit Mt. Manaslu.

The history of people-to-people exchange, however, is nearly twice as long. Buddhist monk KAWAGUCHI Ekai, was the first Japanese to visit Nepal in 1899. Only three years later, in 1902, eight Nepali students were dispatched as the first Nepali to Japan for their study. Consequently, the last year, 2022, was the 120th Anniversary of International Student Exchanges between Japan and Nepal. The number of Nepali students studying in Japan is about 19,000 now, ranking third by country. Here in Nepal, I met many people who returned to Nepal after studying in Japan on scholarships from the Japanese Government. These returnees are playing significant roles in various fields such as government or public sectors, research, educational or medical institutions, and private companies, supporting the development of this country, Nepal. I am truly glad to see that the seeds of people-to-people exchanges through "education," which were planted 120 years ago, have blossomed over the years.

Japan and Nepal have a long and multi-layered history of exchange at the imperial and royal houses level, government-to-government, and private levels. Along with government Official Development Assistance (ODA) such as infrastructure support, human resource development, and earthquake reconstruction, to name a few, there are many beautiful stories of interaction between the people of the two countries. It





it is important to accumulate a success one by one, just like a Sherpa slowly but steadily, step by step, climbs up to the summit of Sagarmatha .

**Which area of development in Nepal does Your Excellency choose to provide assistance to the upliftment of Nepali society?**

Japan has been providing a diverse menu of support for Nepal's development in various sectors, without any geopolitical bias. I believe it is the strength of Japan's assistance.

Above all, the support I see as particularly important is human resource development and technical cooperation that makes par-

ticular use of Japanese characteristics and experiences.

For example, Japan has been supporting the Nagdhunga Tunnel Construction Project. This project is an infrastructure project, and it is a new challenge for Nepal as it is the first road traffic tunnel in this country. At the same time, it is also an opportunity for the Nepali people working on the site to gain knowledge and skill in road tunnel construction, thus truly leading to the development of human resources of Nepali construction sector. In Japan's projects, there is technology transfer. We are doing it for the sake of Nepal.

Based on a support from donors, I hope that Nepal thinks carefully how to utilize such support and linking it to Nepal's further development. I look forward to Nepal's careful project preparation and close cooperation with Japan in the implementation phase. After all, the economic cooperation provided to Nepal is funded by the Japanese taxpayers' money, so it is highly expected to be used effectively, making a difference.

**What steps should Nepal and Japan take in promoting trade and business relations between these two countries? What role do you suggest for the Nepal Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the promotion of industries and trade?**

In discussing the promotion of trade and investment, it is important to note that Nepal should attract Japanese companies' interest with its charm. Japan has a market economy system so Nepal has to win the

can be said that the current friendship between the two countries has been fostered by the accumulation of these multiple factors.

**Would Your Excellency highlight how Japan made such wonderful development both economically and technologically in a short span of time? Are such techniques applicable in the case of Nepal's development?**

I believe that Japan's post-war recovery was the result of both the spirit of self-help in the Japanese people as well as the assistance from the international community, including the World Bank and the Government and Relief in Occupied Areas (GARIOA) Fund/Economic Rehabilitation in Occupied Areas (EROA) Fund. This experience has formulated Japanese assistance philosophy, i.e., "human resource development is the foundation of nation building" and "support for self-help efforts (Not give fish but teach how to catch fish)."

As for Nepal's development, I believe that what is essential is not "techniques," but "the spirit" to achieve development. Nepal's development depends on the will of the people and the government of Nepal itself. It is admirable that Nepal is making strenuous efforts in democracy for its fundamental structural socio-economic transformation aiming at graduating Least Developed Country (LDC) status in 2026, the year happens to be the 70th anniversary of our diplomatic relationship. Japan is more than happy to cooperate with Nepal to this effect. Even if it might be a long way to go,

## INTERVIEW

competition in terms of business profitability among countries in the world. Many economists, both Nepali and international, agree that Nepal has a great potential, such as astonishing natural beauty for tourism, huge water reservation for electricity, geographical advantage

Kansai, Japan is one of coming golden opportunities. As Nepal has declared its participation in the Expo, I really hope Nepal to fully utilize this precious opportunity to promote the high potential, assets and charm that Nepal possesses to Japan and to the world.



in between the two fast glowing giant neighboring markets, and so on. The question is how to make the best use of them. Short answer is to make a business friendly environment.

It's up to Nepali side, but Japanese government is assisting human capacity building in young Nepal government officials and I feel the growing interest in the Japanese private sectors on the Nepali people as indispensable workforce or

“manpower” needed to sustain Japanese society. It will certainly contribute to the development of economic relations as well.

As I have already suggested to the representatives of commerce and industry of this country, the World Exposition 2025 (Expo) scheduled in Osaka,

### **What suggestions do you offer to promote the tourism industry in Nepal?**

Except perhaps for some professionals with a specific and strong purpose for visiting Nepal, such as mountain climbers, safety and convenience are the most important considerations for Japanese tourists. Unfortunately, we witnessed sad aircraft accidents last May and this January. The January accident in particular received a great deal of attention in Japan. The only way to overcome or dispel these shocking impressions is to improve safety standard and continue to operate safely on a daily basis.

Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA) used to be Nepal's only international airport and the gateway from Nepal to

the rest of the world, with a certain risk level. I think it should be more widely known to Nepali people that Japan has shared its experience and technology to improve the safety of TIA. Japan has provided a surveillance radar, facilities and expert guidance on Air Traffic Control, etc. We have also provided regional airports with aviation lighting and advanced solar power generation systems. The air safety and handiness of newly opened international airports such as Gautam Buddha Airport and Pokhara Airport, as well as many domestic airports, play a great role for the tourism industry in Nepal. We know there is a certain risk of life in mountain climbing, but there should be no risk in air travel.

### **What is the average percentage of the population in Japan which is Buddhist? What plan does the Government of Japan have for the development of Lumbini?**

Japanese people's flexibly incorporates several religions, including Shinto and Buddhism, into their daily lives. As you walk the streets of Japan you will find many Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines. According to the Religious Yearbook, the number of Buddhist





in Japan is approximately 83 million. However, in fact, if the number of each religion is added up, the total is about 1.4 times the population of Japan. In other words, there are many people who are counted to more than one religion in the statistics.

In Lumbini, a master plan for the preservation and development of the Lumbini area was drawn up in the 1970s as a project by the United Nations, with the cooperation of Japanese architect Mr. TANGE Kenzo. To date, the Lumbini Development Trust (LDT) has been working to realize the plan.

Since the Tange Plan was based on the situation before Lumbini became a World Heritage Site, now UNESCO is supporting the development and implementation of an integrated master plan that could address the protection of the site as a World Heritage Site. As part of this, since 2008 Japan has been providing support through the Japan Trust Fund. We are currently in the fourth phase of the project.

We hope that the site of Lumbini and the surrounding area will be properly protected and developed sustainably with the cooperation of the local community. In this way Lumbini, an ancient Buddhist pilgrimage site, can continue to host visitors from around the world.

**Many Japanese NGOs are actively launching programs in Nepal in order to contribute to the welfare of Nepali people. How do you assess their contributions in the promotion of people to people contact between the two countries?**

Japanese NGOs are making significant contributions by providing community-based grassroots supports throughout Nepal. It's beyond easy description. They are conducting activities utilizing the knowledge and experience of their respective organizations in various fields, such as disaster prevention, health care, education, and agriculture. The Embassy is providing them with financial, technical and even spiritual supports.

Cooperation with Nepali NGOs and local people is also essential when Japanese NGOs are implementing projects on the ground. Such cooperation is based on a relationship of trust between Japanese NGOs and the people of Nepal. On that point, I often appreciate Nepali people's goodwill.

On the other hand, it cannot be denied that in-

ternational NGOs face various challenges to operate in Nepal due to the rules and regulations. For example, there are various constraints related to the management of project funds and it usually takes a long time to obtain a project agreement to implement a project.

The activities of Japanese NGOs in the project areas are highly appreciated, and I hope that the implementation and cooperation systems of various related organizations will be strengthened and improved so that Japanese NGOs can continue to fully leverage their capabilities in this area. I am saying this as a true friend of Nepal.



**Do you wish to convey any message to our readers regarding further promotion of the ties between the two countries?**

Since my arrival as Ambassador in Nepal, I have felt that the Nepali people have always had a strong affinity and interest in Japan, even during the period when COVID-19 prevented us from meeting in person, and when it was difficult to travel to Japan, and finally during the period when things gradually returned to normal. That is very

encouraging and welcoming for us. I believe that there are multiple commonalities, multi-layered relationships, and a long history between Japan and Nepal that have nurtured our friendship as it stands today.

As I said before, the next milestone year for us would be 2026. That year marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Nepal, and is also the year by which Nepal plans to graduate from LDC. I look forward to seeing the rich and multi-layered relationship between our two countries further develop and strengthen over coming years.

As an Ambassador, while I am fully enjoying my stay here, I am determined to do what I can to ensure that the friendship between Japan and Nepal will continue to be a beautiful and harmonious.

(Reproduced from Look Nepal)

# Coughing Engine And Arrogant Ways



BY: HEMANT ARJYAL

We had the Fly Dubai/FZ (Flt: FZ576) incident that got the local social media, literally, in turmoil. Presumably, the incident would have gone unnoticed had it happened during day time. How could anyone, with a phone camera in hand, not record an aircraft emitting erratic loud bangs and jetting out flame in the night sky? It looked ominous no doubt, but the trouble is, our media needs nothing more than a simple “go round” to be termed as “overshooting”. Some media outlets even reported it landed in Delhi, while in reality, it flew out to Dubai uneventfully after the compressor stall died down on its own. Some wondered about it not landing here and thought if TIA was deficient. It was just bewildering, how could a sensationally serious story like this end suddenly?

Compressor stall is much like what happens to us when a small amount of liquid or food particle gets inadvertently into our windpipe. The body immediately induces coughing as it tries to expel the irritant. A jet engine acts much in the same manner. It also “coughs”, as the smooth airflow is interrupted, as turbulence and pressure fluctuations are created within the turbine. But reasons like worn/dirty/contaminated compressor parts, and in-flight icing can also trigger it. So does operate beyond the engine design envelope or improper engine handling. But it is unthinkable that Fly Dubai, an Emirati government-owned low-cost airline and a partner of famed Emirates Airlines, keeps its engines in a poor state nor expects its crew to mishandle them.

We do not know what was said or not said in the airport airband, but Civil Aviation Authorities

(CAAN) officials claim that no mention was ever made of bird strikes. But CAAN was outraged that Fly Dubai gave TIA a bad name by blaming the bird strike, not the engine malfunction. But it is undisputed that, in the ongoing current dispute, the first salvo was fired by CAAN. It publicized banning two Fly Dubai reps from entering airport premises. That was quite unnecessary, and it was, by far, the most stupid thing, among a few CAAN has been doing lately.

Wonder why it loves to wash its dirty laundry thus. But strangely, we do not get to know what happens thereafter. The same was with separate safety breach cases, due to reduced vertical separation while aircraft were on hold. Nor do we see it genuinely express remorse for not letting RA's two wide bodies flights for two consecutive days discomforting close to one thousand passengers at either end. A clear case for top honchos at both organizations, NAC/RA and CAAN, to have been pushed out long ago.



Occasional birds strike is common elsewhere too. As for the bad name, TIA has enough, of its own making, for not having the required airport infrastructural layout that airlines are always compelled to carry more fuel flying in, wasting payload capacity. But that seems to be the least of CAAN's concerns.

Incidentally, The Aviation Herald ([www.avherald.com](http://www.avherald.com)), keeps track of all minor and major incidents the world over and is taken as a reliable aviation-related news source. Further, people, well versed on the particular topic seem to make their opinion known by commenting on the stories there. As such, a comment claims that the FZ flight had made a MAY-



DAY call, implying the highest form of distress. If true, it means that the stricken craft needed to land without delay.

Another one describes in more detail what follows a birds strike based on the flyer's experience (Note: it is edited for clarity): "If they are small birds, in the cockpit one might see some wiggling of displayed engine parameters and then everything will be stable after a few compressor stalls. No reason to shut this engine down for a temporary gas path fire. At the next stop, the engine is cleaned out properly and perform a borescope or deep inspection if deemed necessary. And if an engine ground run-up is accomplished, you're good to go." To a layman like this scribe, this exactly fits the FZ576 case.

CAAN has been consistently arguing about not finding birds carcass on the runway as proof of no bird strike. But one would only find bird's remains on the runway only if had impacted the wings or the fuselage, not when a small bird is eaten raw by the engine and ejected as smoke.

CAAN, on the other hand, was aghast that the FZ office claimed so even before the aircraft landed there. It is not just CAAN, even Fly Dubai too has a lot more explaining to do from their side, more so, as the problematic engine is rumored to have been replaced and sent to its maker. While the particular B737-800/A6-FED was on the ground for about 44 hours and is already ferrying passengers, CAAN is still sulking, literally, like a runaway compressor stall. (showing no sign of stopping.

Donning two different caps of service provider and the regulator does not come easy. The FZ and other incidents cited above show there is utter confusion about CAAN and the role it is seen to be playing. It is time CAAN mends its ways and the organization is split as suggested by ICAO and EASA at the earliest.

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## नेपाल राष्ट्र बैंकको अनुरोध

- आधुनिक प्रविधिको प्रयोग गरी समय र लागत कम लाग्ने विद्युतीय बैंकिङ कारोबार गरौं ।
- राजस्व, विल/महसुल, आवेदन शुल्क, दस्तुर आदिको भुक्तानी विद्युतीय माध्यमबाट घरैमा बसेर गर्न सकिन्छ ।
- QR Code वा डेबिट/क्रेडिट कार्डबाट नि-शुल्क तथा कम शुल्कमा पैसा भुक्तानी गर्न सकिन्छ ।
- डिजिटल कारोबार गर्दा पैसा बोक्नुपर्ने झन्झट नहुने, रकम चोरी हुने/हराउने समस्या रहँदैन ।
- नोटको प्रयोग कम हुने भएकाले नोट छपाइ तथा व्यवस्थापन खर्च कम हुन्छ ।
- आफ्नो बैंक खाता रहेको बैंक वा वित्तीय संस्थाबाट विद्युतीय कारोबारसम्बन्धी जानकारी लिऊं ।
- डिजिटल कारोबारमा विद्युतीय माध्यमबाट हुनसक्ने ठगीबारे सजग बनौं ।
- विद्युतीय कारोबार गर्दा प्रयोग हुने Personal ID, Password, Pincode, कसैलाई पनि नदिऊं ।

## IMPORT OF PETROL

# Declines 26 Percent

*Since Nepal Oil Corporation indicates that imports of gasoline, LPG, and diesel usage have fallen by 26%, it is wonderful to progress towards the NDC and SDC target.*

By A CORRESPONDENT

The import of petroleum products into Nepal decreases for the first time in ten years. Numerous homes in metropolitan areas have started using electricity for cooking as a result of increased power production and improved quality of supply, while industrialists have substantially reduced the use of fuel for energy generating.

The decrease in petroleum product imports is welcome news for Nepal, which has already committed to the Sustainable Development Goals and to making zero emissions by 2050 and a 30 percent reduction in LPG usage. The Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), under the direction of Managing Director Kul Man Ghising, plays a crucial role in this.

His current attempts to provide reliable, high-quality electricity are encouraging people to switch to electric cooking and encouraging business owners to stop using generators.

Amrit Man Nakarmi recently presented a study in which he found that industries were using less diesel and more electricity for cooking.

For urban families, electricity is significantly less expensive than LPG. One cannot disregard the impact of electric cooking appliances to lowering the import of petroleum products given the import of such equipment documented in the Department of Customs during the last month.

Additionally, according to the NEA's data, industrial and metropolitan areas like Kathmandu have seen a sharp rise in their electricity use. The number of electric vehicles

is growing as are the charging stations across Nepal, even though they have yet to make a noticeable contribution.

The quality and regularity of the electricity have already improved under the direction of the managing director of Kul Man Ghising. Power outages are uncommon in urban regions like the Kathmandu Valley. No light portion restored the system in a shorter amount of time thanks to an effective maintenance procedure.

It would be dishonest to solely attribute the decline in petroleum product imports to the current economic downturn at a time when power generation is rising.

"The country's economic downturn has had an impact on fuel usage as well. In the current fiscal year, the import of mineral fuel, which had been rising yearly, has dropped by more than 15%. Additionally, it demonstrates a drop in market gasoline usage, according to the online.com portal.

Online reports that during the past nine months, the import of

diesel has declined by 25% while the import of gasoline and aviation fuel has decreased at a typical rate. With the exception of aviation fuel, all other fuel imports have generally been declining. The quantity of foreign currency required for imports, however, is unchanged as a result of the price increase.

The overall volume of gasoline imported for the current fiscal year 2079–2080 decreased by 16.44 percent, according to Nepal Oil Corporation. However, the amount of money spent on importing various mineral fuels has increased by 0.42 percent.

Data show that between July of last year and 17 Baisakh, the import of gasoline decreased by 8.77 percent. The company purchased 5 lakh 32 thousand 208 kiloliters of gasoline during this time. This shows that 56 000 21 kiloliters of gasoline are typically utilized per month.

Diesel imports have also declined by 26.09 percent in volume. The company appears to have imported an average of 1 lakh 9 thousand 59





kiloliters of fuel every month, despite importing 10 lakh 36 thousand 67 kiloliters of diesel overall this year.

The import of kerosene has also declined. Imports of kerosene have dropped by 4.12%. While 9 64 kiloliters of kerosene have been imported since July, the average monthly importation of kerosene has only been 954 kiloliters.

Additionally, there are fewer cooking gas imports now. Gas imports have fallen by 3.13 percent over this time frame. It appears that throughout this time, when a total of 4 lakh 6 thousand 785 metric tons of gas are imported, an average of 42 thousand 819 metric tons of gas are being used each month.

The amount of aviation fuel imported has increased. The corporation reports that this year, imports of aviation fuel have climbed by 13.64 percent. A total of 141 thousand 340 kiloliters of aviation fuel have been imported throughout this time. This indicates that 14,877 kiloliters of aviation fuel are now consumed on average per month. The import of aviation gasoline is higher than it was last year because of the decline in aviation activity following the corona pandemic.

The corporation claims that this year alone, gasoline imports totaled 2 trillion 24 billion 57 crore 57 million 13 thousand 725 rupees. This represents a 0.4% increase over the same time previous year. Even though there were less imports after the Russia-Ukraine war, there were still more



exports due to the high cost of fuel.

The Corporation's spokesperson, Manoj Thakur, claims that the economic downturn has reduced fuel imports since the economy is not operating properly. "The more economic activity there is, the more fuel will be consumed," he claims.

Fuel usage and goods transportation will rise as additional projects' building work picks up speed. Because of this, both the need for gasoline and its import will rise.

However, the current fiscal year's construction projects suffered from the impact of rising construction material prices. Despite the fact that oil is inexpensive in India, the trend of smuggling smuggled oil into the country and selling it there has increased this year despite the reductions in fuel costs made by both the government

and the private sector.

As the pace of development projects quickens, he predicted that both fuel consumption and the movement of commodities would rise. As a result, there will be a rise in both the import and demand for gasoline. However, the current fiscal year's construction projects suffered as a result of rising construction material prices. Despite government and private sector efforts to reduce fuel prices, India still has inexpensive gasoline, and this year has seen an increase in the practice of sneaking oil into the country and selling it there.

Despite 5% of families using electric stoves, according to the previous year's national census, he claims that the import of gas has not dropped. "More people are using electric stoves as an alternative, but they still cannot completely stop using gas," he claimed.

The decrease in POL is helping Nepal go in the correct directions at a time when the country has pledged to have zero emissions by the year 2050 through its Nationally Determined Commitment and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aim to reduce LPG consumption by 30%.



# Sluggish Performance

*Director General of the Asian Development Bank Kenichi Yokoyama push for Nepal to enhance portfolio performance.*

By A CORRESPONDENT

**K**enichi Yokoyama, the director general of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for South Asia, is familiar with Nepal. Kenichi served as Nepal's country director from 2013 to 2017 and helped the country boost its portfolio from 15% to over 25%.

As he attended the portfolio review conference last month, the performance of the Nepal portfolio was once more decreasing. Kenichi has a plethora of understanding about Nepal as a Ph.D. student and country director.

He worked in Nepal as an academic while earning his Ph.D. in community management irrigation system in eastern Nepal before moving to Nepal in 2013 as a country director for Asian Development Bank.

In addition, Yokoyama served as the Principal Water Resources Specialist for the South Asia Department of the ADB, where he was in charge of planning water resource projects for nations like Bangladesh, India, and Nepal.

During his tenure as a country director in Nepal, the groundwork was laid for the completion of some of the major initiatives, including the Melamchi Drinking Water Project, the Gautam Buddha International Airport, transmission lines, motorways, including the Koshi Bridge, and rural roads.

The COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing political meddling in the Government, and political upheaval have all harmed Nepal's portfolio.

The current Nepal Country Director Arnaud Cauchois, who is also familiar with Nepal from his work in the water resources sector developing the Bagmati River Master Plan, including the recently inaugurated Dhap Dam, visited the project sites as the pace of the construction of roads and other infrastructure projects slowed.

With Ministers and oth-



er top officials, he went to the Butwal-Narayanghat Road sites and the Mugling-Pokhara Road sites last month to quicken the speed of construction. Along with NEA's MD Kul Man Ghising, he also went to the Tanahu Hydropower Project and the Marsyangdi Corridor Transmission Project.

Two important areas of the ADB's portfolio in Nepal are energy and transportation. The portfolio will get better in the following days as the speed of Tanahu Hydropower, other transmission lines along the Marsyangdi Corridor, and distribution upgrade projects in the Kathmandu Valley pick up. Following the visit of Country Director Arnaud Cauchois and ministers to two road-building sites, there have been some improvements seen.

Nepal has to improve its capital expenditure, especially the portfolio performance in key sectors in the Asian Development Bank's portfolio, as the country transitions from an LDC to a middle-income economy by 2026.

ADB Director General

Yokoyama urged Nepal to improve Portfolio Performance Key to Development Results and Higher Concessional Resource Allocations in his speech to the gathering.

Improved portfolio performance, according to him, is essential for the timely delivery of development results and achieving higher and more consistent allocations of concessional resources. He was addressing during the first day of a two-day country portfolio review meeting that the Nepali government and ADB organized to evaluate the development projects it supports.

"To improve project delivery, the Ministry of Finance (MOF) is aggressively addressing difficulties. According to Yokoyama, for Nepal to be eligible for greater concessional resource allocations under the ADB's performance-based allocation methodology, it must disburse at least \$350 million to \$450 million annually. "By pursuing higher implementation disciplines, the government and ADB can pursue higher disbursement."



Finance Minister Dr. Prakash Sharan Mahat personally attended the review meeting due to Nepal's urgent need to increase capital expenditure and secure fresh loans and grants for growth.

Dr. Mahat, the Minister of Finance of Nepal, presided over a discussion on sector and project performance that was attended by government secretaries, senior officials, project directors, and employees of the ADB's Nepal Resident Mission.

"We value the support ADB has provided for Nepal's growth throughout the years. According to Dr. Mahat, the government is committed to overcoming obstacles in project implementation and disbursements and enhancing the impact of capital investments for development on the ground for Nepali citizens.

In order to evaluate the advancement of development projects financed by the ADB, the government of Nepal and the ADB arranged a two-day country portfolio review meeting. He made this remark during the opening session of the meeting.

ADB's active portfolio in Nepal, which supported a variety of important sectors including energy, transport, agriculture, water, urban infrastructure and services, rural development and natural resources, health, and education, stood at over \$3.2 billion as of December 31, 2022.

According to ADB Country Director for Nepal Arnaud Cauchois, "In 2022, the overall portfolio performance in Nepal was lower than expected, affected primarily due to insufficient project staff and high turnover, challenges in contract management, delays in environmental and land clearances, and disruption of the construction supply chain. "Following the review, MOF and ADB will agree on specific actions to overcome the challenges, and we are hopeful that project implementation and disbursement will pick up pace," he continued.

ADB has given Nepal around



\$7.6 billion in financial and technical assistance since it began operating there in 1969.

While continuing its efforts to end extreme poverty, ADB is dedicated to establishing a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific. It was founded in 1966 and is owned by 68 members, 49 of them are locals.

"Following the review, MOF and ADB will agree on specific actions to address the issues, and we are optimistic that project implementation and disbursement will accelerate," he continued. ADB has given Nepal around \$7.6 billion in financial and technical assistance since it began operating there in 1969.

Although the performance number is lower than anticipated, the main reasons for this are a lack of project staff and high staff turnover, difficulties with contract management, delays in environmental and land clearances, and disruptions in the supply chain for building materials, according to ADB Country Director for Nepal Arnaud Cauchois. He continued, "Following the review, MOF and ADB will agree on specific actions to overcome the challenges and we are hopeful that project implementation and disbursement will pick up pace."

For Director General of ADB Yokoyama and Country Director Ar-

naud Cauchois, the recent portfolio meeting give hope to accelerate the Nepal portfolio performance.

Understanding the importance of the Asian Development Bank, As the largest multi-lateral development partner of Nepal, Nepalese officials also expressed their commitment to improve the portfolio improving the concerns raised in the review period.

#### Award for Best Performer

At a special ceremony held in conjunction with the meeting, Finance (Revenue) Secretary Ram Prasad Ghimire presented awards to ADB-supported projects for their accomplishments in effective project management, gender equality and social inclusion, and environmental and social protection monitoring. Among the projects that have received funding are the Urban Water Supply and Sanitation (Sector) Project, the Bagmati River Basin Improvement Project-Additional Financing, the SASEC Highway Improvement Project, the Rural Enterprise Financing Project, and the Power Transmission and Distribution Efficiency Enhancement Project. Top authorities were permitted to address the problems preventing Nepal from strengthening its portfolio management following the country portfolio review conference.

## POWER SHORTAGE SCANDLE

# A Stunt To Rock NEA

*The capacity of the nation's and the eastern region's power plants to produce electricity decreases by two-thirds when the rivers' water levels drop in the second week of April, so the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), under the leadership of Managing Director Kul Man Ghising, has made efforts to address the issues by supplying electricity to the region's industrial areas. However, the NEA MD Ghising was called to resign during a protest by a group of industrialists, some of whom also own run-off river hydropower and some of whom are defaulters. Individually motivated protests against NEA and MD Ghising came to a disastrous end when the local power supply was restored.*

By A CORRESPONDENT

The eastern industrial section of the Dubi Corridor experienced some power supply challenges in the first and second weeks of April. Even after the power was back on, a number of dealers and business owners with vested interests flocked to the street to fish in trouble water. However, it was foiled following the restoration of electricity to the region.

The eastern region's electrical supply was impacted by both a sharp decline in power generation at hydroelectric facilities—by roughly three-quarters—and technical problems with transmission lines. Even though NEA swiftly corrected all the issues, several vested interest groups that are personally predisposed against NEA's MD Ghising started to stir up trouble. When the agitation ended in failure, MD Ghising, who has been

successfully managing NEA and Nepal's power system, restored the electrical supply.

"It is anticipated that the pre-monsoon season will begin in the coming days, which will probably result in a rise in the river's water flow. As a result, there will be a rise in electricity production, with excess electricity beginning to be shipped to India in mid-May. The managing director of NEA, Kul Man Ghising, stated that "We hope to export about 1,200 megawatts of electricity this year and have already submitted a list of programs to the Indian authorities for approval for export clearance."

### The demand of Eastern Region

With Duhabi Grid's 160 MW, Damak Anaramani's 80 MW, Lahan 35, Mirchaiya 35, and Rupni 30 MW, there is more than 340 MW of demand in the east. How-

ever, there is only 30 MW of production.

For instance, 200 MW generation capacity projects are running in the East's Kabeli Corridor, but as of the end of April, they were only generating 30 MW.

Dudhkosi Solu is only supplying 27 MW in the Solu Corridor while having 86 MW of capacity. Despite having a 23 MW installed capacity, lower Solu is only producing 6 MW.

269 MW of power were delivered to NEA's eastern sector, including 200 MW from Dhalkebar, 132 kV East-West Transmission line, 30 MW from Kabeli Corridor, 31 MW from Solu Corridor, and 8 MW from Kosi Corridor.

There is a need for 80 megawatts of energy in the Anaramani area to Damak in Jhapa alone, as demand of electricity is rising





throughout all of Nepal. The NEA is running the Kulekhani reservoir at full capacity around-the-clock to meet the current demand. Additionally, due to insufficient domestic output, 500 megawatts of power are imported on a daily average.

Despite having a combined installed capacity of almost 200 megawatts, the run-off-the-river hydropower plants in Taplejung, Panchthar, and Ilam are now only producing and transmitting 30 megawatts of electricity over the Kabeli Corridor transmission line.

Because there were no showers or snow this winter, the nation's potential for hydroelectric facilities to produce energy based on river flow during the dry season declined by 30% this year.

Even though most industries are operating as usual, more electricity is consumed than in the previous year. Additionally, the irrigation load to the east is unchanged.

As soon as the fields start to dry out, farmers water them. There are 80 to 100 MW needed for irrigation throughout the na-

tion. Rain eliminates the irrigation load, allowing the industry to use that electricity. The irrigation load alone in the east is 45 MW.

Since the snow started melting and rain is falling over the past few days, those plants power generation has increased. According to their needs, the industries are now regularly supplied with power, according to MD Ghising.

According to the Hydrological and Metrological Department, the pre-monsoon will begin by the first week of May. Following that, both the river's water level and its output of energy will rise. Additionally, NEA intends to begin sending excess electricity to India beginning in the first week of June.

The NEA reports that in April, the system's peak electrical demand reached 1,750 megawatts. The base demand is 1,275 MW, with an average demand of 1,300 MW.

With the exception of the NEA's power plants, only 14% of the installed capacity is produced by hydropower facilities in the private sector.

However, NEA has made it apparent that the issue with the availability of power in places like the Koshi Province's Sunsari Morang Industrial Corridor is a temporary one.

### **Protest Of Vested Interest**

A group of industrialists, some of whom are NEA defaulters, made an attempt to cause chaos at a time when NEA management was making plans to put an end to the disruption, supported by former NEA senior officials who supplied electricity to industries while cutting power to general consumers. They did this by blaming NEA's MD Ghising alone for the diminishing water supply.

"Rather than being driven by economic or commercial interests, the traders' movement appeared to be politically planted. Because of electrical generation failure, power supply disruption is a common emergency. When it rains in the winter in Kathmandu, the transformers blow out. When the temperature rises in Terai, the load increases, and when the riv-





er is dry, the electricity decreases, according to Bikash Thapa's online E-kagaj.

The demand for electricity in Terai rises as the temperature rises. The load increases from fan to irrigation to industrial regions. A conductor will break, the device will catch fire from excessive strain, and a low-voltage light will turn on. The eastern region experienced the same event, according to Thapa.

#### **Need Storage Project**

The Kulekhani reservoir project is the only one the government of Nepal has constructed in the previous forty years. The current pillar of the energy sector is NEA's own, naturally-based power plants. During the harvesting and drying procedure, these power plants are somehow keeping the supply level constant.

Despite having a total installed hydroelectric capacity of 2250 MW, Nepal only generates about 1000 MW in dry session. Out of this, NEA's plants are producing 700 MW, although the linked capacity of the private sector is just 15% or roughly 300 MW.

Although hydropower projects' installed capacities rose this year, MD Ghising noted that production could not rise during the dry session because there was neither rain nor snow.

Studies have shown that Nepal is one of the most vulnerable countries in terms of climate change and Nepal will have to face extreme weather with high-intensity of rain, hot weather, and drought and so on.

With the water level in the river uncertain, the cycle of rapid increase and decrease of electricity generation is going on. As the flow of the water decreases, the production of electricity also declines.

#### **Lack of Transmission**

Transmission lines and distributions line are prerequisites to increasing domestic consumption and maintaining power sup-

ply. In order to increase internal consumption, transmission lines are needed to improve the existing electricity load.

MD Ghising has been checking and clearing the impediments at numerous transmission building sites since the first day of his second tenure. MD Ghising has been able to remove obstructions from various transmission lines, notably the 220 kV Bharatpur New Butwal, during his one-and-a-half-year tenure.

This year's electricity shortfall in the eastern industrial corridor is caused by a lack of transmission lines as well as a lack of storage projects and climate change. Kaligandaki's electricity cannot be sent from Butwal to the east or from Dhalkebar to Inaruwa without a higher voltage transmission line.

Dhalkebar also connects Upper Tamakosi (456 MW) and other power plants. Even the transmission line needed to move too much electricity from Dhalkebar to Birgunj does not exist. It is difficult to transport more than 240 MW from Dhalkebar to Birgunj and Inaruwa using the current 132







kV transmission line.

In order to avoid issues similar to the current one in the summer of next year, MD Ghising stated that the building of the Hetauda-Dhalkebar-Inruwa 400 KV transmission line and the Hetauda-Bharatpur-Bardghat-New Butwal 220 KV transmission line is being completed as soon as feasible.

According to MD Ghising, once these lines are finished, there won't be any issues with the transmission lines carrying electricity from Dhalkebar to the east and west.

A significant amount of the barriers placed in the Hetauda-Dhalkebar-Inruwa transmission line have been removed as a result of the top court's judgment and MD Ghising's rounds of con-

versations with locals, politicians, and bureaucrats. There can be no reliable supply of electricity in the east until this line is finished. Regardless of how loudly business leaders yell and protest.

Ghising stated that the construction of the Dhalkebar-Inruwa 400 kV transmission line and the Hetauda-Bharatpur-Bardghat-Naya Ghising said that work on the Hetauda-Bharatpur-Bardghat-Naya Butwal 220 kV transmission line and the Dhalkebar-Inruwa 400 kV transmission line is already underway, and they are working to finish them as soon as possible in order to avoid any potential problems during the coming summer. He continued by saying that there won't be any problems with the transfer of power from Dhalkebar to the eastern and

western regions once these transmission lines are finished.

Hotwire, tripped breakers, and load fluctuations can all result in significant disturbances. Once the breakers tripped, the lines were cut. Reconstruction and change will take time. The industrialists complained that energy was not purposefully delivered to the sector despite these technological issues.

### **Politics-Driven Agitation**

Numerous people believe that the recent unrest in the eastern region against NEA for failing to provide electricity is politically driven. "Some enterprises took the 'dedicated and trunk' line and kept people's houses in the dark in cooperation with some dishonest NEA personnel. People did not protest that we had to live in



## COVERSTORY

the dark due to the industry at the time, according to journalist Bikas Thapa's article in e-kagaj.

"Instead, they sat down. The inaction and disorganization of the authorities did not mean that snow did not fall on the mountains. The snow did not fall and did not melt and the water in the river has dried up because of Kulman. Our industrialists should know - apart from Bhutan, which country in South Asia has a 24-hour electricity supply? What is the condition of electricity in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, and Pakistan?" asked editor Thapa.

The entire country is affected by this issue, not just the eastern part. Only 10 trillion rupees will need to be spent on transmission lines and substations to efficiently distribute electricity across the nation. Without investment, no transmission line will be built. It is clear how the government is doing. There is a circumstance where the employees are unable to consume their pay and benefits. The three billion rupee revenue for this year was not increased. For the government, investing in broadcasting infrastructure has become a pipe dream.

The money that NEA has made the leaders envious. Only if the authority has the financial wherewithal will the investment be undertaken. All public institutions, except for the authorities, are in ruins.

The NEA has made mon-

ey, decreased leaks, and halted load shedding, yet some retired senior officials with the NEA are unhappy. Because they were unable to exterminate flies at the time. The days of giving the industry control while taking commissions, accepting bribes when moving staff, and requiring commission in contracts are long gone. Reduce the loss from where the leakage is coming from. The population has gradually



emerged from the shadows. However, that class is not content, according to journalist Thapa.

That class is so thrilled when load shedding continues, when power leakage increases when losses mount when electricity must be imported from India. Their search is therefore restricted to a hole in the sesame field. Those who have studied and worked for the authority all of their lives and identify as electrical engineers are irate at its growth and development, but they continue to receive pensions from it. The purported relocation of businessmen in the eastern region is what the class finds frustrating, according to

Thapa.

Power supply interruptions will continue to happen in the eastern area of Nepal since its hydropower plants are dependent on the run-of-the-river scheme—especially during the dry season. The electricity supply will be consistent as the 400 kV Hetauda-Ddhalkebar-Inaruwa transmission line construction is nearing completion.

“The recent movement against MD Ghising is deliberate and driven by politics. Why criticize MD Ghising, who changed the course of Nepal's power supply and made industrialists wealthy? By efficiently regulating the electric supply,

MD Ghising made a significant contribution to the end of load shedding. In the current situation, when the snow has not yet begun to melt, power scarcity is natural. Ghising's lack of water is not her fault. He is not at blame for failing to produce electricity. Thapa questioned, “Most of the industrialists from Biratnagar are defaulters and have bigger debt.

The power supply problem in the eastern industrial zone was improved because of MD Ghising's participation. An attempt by special interests to undermine the NEA fails miserably.



# Safeguarding Human Rights

By A CORRESPONDENT

The residents of Sudur Pachim Province and Karnali Province, the two most backward provinces, were able to watch European films for the first time. Sudur Paschim and Karnali Provinces, which face discrimination, exclusion, and rights violations, are ideal locations for a host festival on the theme of human rights for all.

The theme of the film festival, human rights for all, is highly pertinent to the residents of Far West and Karnali.

Nona Deprez, the European Union Ambassador to Nepal, launched the second edition of NEUFF the Surkhet on May 3 during a function at Mid-West University.

Earlier, Dr. Joelle Hivonne, Deputy Head of the European Delegation to Nepal, launched the first phase of the Nepal European Union Film Festival (NEUFF) with the theme 'Celebrating Human Rights for All' at the Far-Western University in Mahendranagar on Thursday (28 April) during an event.

Dr. Hivonnet also spoke with students at a far western university about the historic approval of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and its essential role in uniting nations to collectively defend human rights.

The last round of screenings will take held in Kathmandu from the 12th to the 15th of May in the Film Development Board's Chabahil hall.

The EU Ambassador to Nepal, Nona Deprez, stated before the film festival that this year's EU Film Festival intends to increase public awareness of

human rights and to create networks and a sense of solidarity to protect such rights for all.

Since 2023 will mark the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the EU Ambassador to Nepal, Nona Deprez, said, "We have chosen 'Celebrating Human Rights for all' as the theme for our film festival to raise public awareness about their rights and to build networks and solidarity to safeguard the human rights of all."

According to schedule, the Far-Western University in Mahendranagar hosted the first day of the Nepal European Union Film Festival (NEUFF) from April 28 to 30 with the subject "Celebrating Human Rights for All."

The festivals in Nepal's far-west and mid-west featured screenings of eight European films by well-known directors as well as eight Nepali short films created by budding Nepali producers. They will also be shown in Kathmandu.

In addition to the movie screenings, the EU in Nepal also put on side activities with an emphasis on how movies can advance human rights.

Since 2023 will mark the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the EU ambassador to Nepal, Nona Deprez, said, "We have chosen 'Celebrating Human Rights for all' as the theme for our film festival in order to raise public awareness about their rights and to build networks and solidarity to



to safeguard the human rights of all." The movie tells the tale of migration, one of the most important modern human rights challenges.

The other movies selected for the festival from our collection are Oscar & Lilly (Austria), Ramona (Spain), Io Sto Bene (Luxembourg, Belgium, Germany, and Italy), Imad's Childhood (Sweden, Latvia, Iraq), Invisible (Lithuania, Latvia, Ukraine, Spain), Dating Amber (Ireland, UK), Mitra (Netherlands), and Invisible (Lithuania, Latvia, Ukraine, Spain). They were all

I Want to Be Like Madhuri Dixit, Gurkha Girl, and Blues of Pink, all directed by Ankit Khadki and supported by the Tony Hagen Foundation in Nepal, are three other Nepali films that are being screened at the festival.

The other Nepali movies made by young Nepali filmmakers are Drifting Clouds by Deepa Shrestha, Bagthan by Sunil Pandey, Living With Dignity by Poonam Poudel, and Four Nights by Deepak Rauniyar.

Anyday Now, Mitra, and Imad's Childhood, three European films in the festival, will also have subtitles in Nepali.

For the past 11 years, the European Union Delegation in Nepal has been hosting film festivals. This cultural event, which is a top priority on our annual calendar, has consistently received positive feedback from the Nepali public. It has helped to promote cross-cultural interaction and connections between European and Nepali filmmakers and movie fans.

safeguard the human rights of all."

The Hamy Ramezan-directed picture "Any Day Now" will open all three locations. The movie tells the



FAO-NEPAL

# Agri Tech

## *FAO-Nepal Hosts AgroTech Symposium in Nepal to Transform the Agriculture Sector*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Nepal is attempting to boost the agriculture sector through technology at a time when technology is helping the agriculture sector transform on a global scale.

Together with the Nepali government, FAO-Nepal supports long-term agricultural sector transformation in Nepal by promoting agrotech in that country. The AgriTech Symposium supports agricultural transformation through collaboration and digitization.

The Agritech Symposium, which was recently held in Kathmandu, aimed to revolutionize Nepal's agricultural industry by promoting knowledge sharing, the exchange of best practices, and innovation in agricultural and rural transformation.

The symposium was organized by FAO Nepal in partnership with the Nepali government, the ministries of agriculture and livestock development, communications, and information technology, as well as the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), to examine how digitization might revolutionize Nepal's agricultural industry.

Distinguished guests, including Dr. Govinda Prasad Sharma, Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MoALD), Prof. Dr. Sharada Thapaliya, Registrar of the Agriculture and Forestry University (AFU), Ken Sh., Secretary of the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (MoCIT), and Dr. Deepak Kharal, Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MoALD), attended the Agritech

Symposium's opening ceremony.

In addition to giving the opening remarks, Sabnam Shivakoti, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MoALD), spoke on "Agricultural Interventions in Digital Nepal Framework: Status and Way Forward." She highlighted significant developments in Nepal's digital agricultural landscape, including initiatives from the public and private sectors and the Digital Nepal Framework 2019.

The need of utilizing digital technologies to improve the efficiency and efficacy of agricultural operations in Nepal was emphasized by Shivakoti as she went into detail about the numerous initiatives done to promote digitalization in the agricultural sector.

The Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MoALD), Dr. Govinda Prasad Sharma, emphasized the value of technology in the agricultural industry and its potential to transform food production and tackle issues like climate change, land degradation, and diseases.

Dr. Sharma emphasized the necessity of utilizing digital technologies, such as drones, apps, and initiatives for weather and pest surveillance, to help farmers embrace precision agriculture techniques and make informed decisions. He reaffirmed MoALD's commitment to encouraging and supporting the use of technology in agriculture in order to improve the state of Nepal's agricultural sector.

Krishna Bahadur Raut, Sec-

retary of the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (MoCIT), highlighted the positive impact of digitalization on the agriculture sector, including enhancing farmers' access to markets and bridging the gap in the middle layer of the agricultural value chain. He reaffirmed MoCIT's commitment to promoting and supporting digitalization in agriculture as a key driver for the overall development and growth of the sector in Nepal.

The presentation featured insightful remarks from Ken Shimizu, FAO Representative for Bhutan and Nepal, who emphasized the growing significance of cutting-edge digital technology in solving the issues of climate change and feminization in agriculture. In the agriculture industry, he emphasized how digital technology has the ability to increase productivity, increase transparency, improve management effectiveness, and enable smart marketing. Mr. Shimizu also highlighted the role that digital technologies, such as e-commerce platforms, remote sensing, and precision agriculture, play in empowering the nation's sustainable agricultural development.

Sharda Thapaliya, registrar from Agriculture and Forestry University (AFU), emphasized the significance of digitalization in various aspects of agriculture, including human resource management, education sector, and market-driven curriculum development. Ms. Thapaliya stressed the significance of collaborative efforts among stakeholders to drive digitalization in agriculture and unlock its full potential. By



working together, stakeholders can foster innovation, efficiency, and sustainable growth in the agriculture sector, ultimately benefiting farmers, consumers, and the broader agricultural ecosystem.

Mark Henderson, representing USAID, emphasized the vital role of traceability in agriculture for enhancing transparency, sustainability, and consumer confidence in agricultural products. He highlighted how technological innovations are driving efficiency and productivity in agriculture. Mr. Henderson emphasized that fostering collaborative partnerships between the government and private sector in Nepal can facilitate the digitalization of farming services, yielding positive outcomes for the agriculture sector as a whole.

During the symposium, three prominent presenters - Mr. Thomas Kurian from UNCDF, Anita Mahat from USAID, and Mr. Gerard Sylvester representing FAO Headquarters - highlighted the crucial role of digitizing the agriculture value chain, fostering multi-stakeholder collaborations, and driving innovation to effectively address challenges and unlock the full potential of digital technology in agriculture.

The Agritech Symposium emphasized the need for government

policy interventions, digital platforms, R&D support and collaboration with startups, market linkages, financing models, and gender-inclusive approaches for agricultural digitalization in Nepal. Stakeholder collaboration, government policies, capacity building, and public-private partnerships were highlighted as crucial elements to create a conducive environment for sustainable agricultural development, benefiting small farmers.

sustainable development.

The panelists also underlined the importance of promoting digital skills among farmers and other stakeholders. These programs can provide farmers with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively utilize digital tools in their farming practices, enabling them to maximize the benefits of these technologies. This includes access to finance, credit, and digital payment promotion, which can contribute to improved agricultural productivity and sustainability.

The Agritech Symposium in Nepal served as a significant platform for over 350 stakeholders to come together and deliberate on the potential of digitalization in trans-



The symposium included panel discussions on digitalizing Nepal's agricultural sector, fostering financial inclusion through digital financial services, and building a sustainable digital agriculture ecosystem. Key discussions emphasized the importance of government policy interventions, regulatory frameworks for data privacy and cyber security, and standards for digital platforms and services. Creating a conducive environment for agricultural digitalization through collaborative efforts between the public and private sectors was highlighted as crucial for

forming the country's agriculture sector. Through knowledge-sharing, best practice exchange, and collaboration, the symposium paved the way for a more digitally-enabled and sustainable agriculture sector in Nepal. The recommendations and outcomes of the symposium are expected to serve as a guiding roadmap for future initiatives in agricultural digitalization, driving positive changes in Nepal's agriculture sector and benefiting farmers and other stakeholders alike.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PEACEBUILDING

# Experiences in Nepal

*A study conducted by Hiroshima University revealed the state of local environmental peacebuilding and conflict resolution in Nepal.*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Nepal is one of the countries with the greatest environmental vulnerability. Natural disasters can take many forms, ranging from earthquakes and climate change to floods and landslides. Similarly, community and individual encroachment into forest and natural habitat regions is widespread.

The devastation of the forest and other natural resources is significant because it is a developing country. Similarly, a site is required to handle human waste as a result of urbanization and population growth. People are dying as a result of air pollution, and community clashes over water sharing, particularly between lower and upper riparian areas, are intensifying.

Furthermore, the rivalry between the three state-run parties has recently deteriorated. The rivalry between the federal, provincial, and local governments is being blamed for the country's en-

vironmental disaster.

Almost every day, Nepalese living in various parts of the country face environmental challenges of one kind or another. Forest fires, rubbish conflicts, air pollution, water disputes, and human-wildlife conflicts are destroying people's lives, and the number of annual water-related disasters is dangerously on the rise.

Disagreements and conflicts have gotten worse as a result of the disasters and their aftermath. Nepal has yet to publicly begin the process of promoting environmental harmony.

Nepal has a track record of political peace-building and conflict resolution, which enabled it







to incorporate Maoist forces in the constitutional process.

Despite the fact that Nepal is at high risk of potential community disputes as a result of its sensitivity to environmental and climate-related disasters, the country has only just begun to learn about local environmental peace-building.

Thanks to the University of Hiroshima in Japan, Nepalese and Japanese academics have undertaken a number of programs in Nepal to learn about environmental peacebuilding. Scholars, experts, and students from higher education institutions shared their research at a half-day research workshop on Local Environmental Peace-building in Nepal organized jointly by the Network for Education and Research on Peace and Sustainability (NERPS), Hiroshima University, Hiroshima University Scholars' Alumni Nepal (HiUSAN), and Department of Conflict, Peace, and Development Studies, Tribhuvan University.

The half-day event, which was inaugurated by former environment minister Ganesh Shah, addressed a wide range of issues, including conflict resolution and

peace promotion.

Hiroshima University Professor Dahlia Simangan emphasized the goal and indicated that this research was a collaborative effort between Hiroshima University and HiUSAN.

Environmental peacebuilding is a set of conflict-sensitive approaches for dealing with environmental issues. It consists of equitable resource allocation for long-term peace and development, as well as technical solutions to environmental deterioration and shortages. "Environmental peace-building approaches are typically focused on macro-level and top-down efforts, even though it

provides the conceptual lens for understanding peace-promoting practices amid environmental issues," Professor Dahlia Simangan noted. "Further research is required to better understand local dynamics and bottom-up approaches to environmental peacebuilding."

"This collaborative effort by Japanese and Nepalese academic and research institutions will aid in the development of an environmental peacebuilding mechanism."

She indicated that Hiroshima University will do additional study in collaboration with Tribhuvan University, the Conflict Management Department, and HiUSAN members.

Organized to highlight common environmental peace-building strategies in local communities confronted with water disputes, forest-sharing disputes, climate-change conflicts, and structural disagreements over environmental issues in all three tiers of governance.

Kushum Shakya, dean of Tribhuvan University's college of humanities and social sciences, spoke at the ceremony and expressed gratitude to Hiroshima University for financing research in Nepal and partnering with the TU.





To conduct research for the benefit of broader areas, TU is willing to engage with academic institutions such as Hiroshima University.

Chiranjibi Bhandari of the Department of Conflict, Peace, and Development Studies This research, according to Chiranjibi Bhandari, contributes to a grassroots understanding of environmental peacebuilding in Nepal.

In his keynote lecture, Ganesh Shah, who has worked in the water and environmental sectors for over 30 years, indicated that environmental conflict will certainly become a big concern in the future. Describing how minor water-related disagreements in agriculture and drinking water increase the likelihood of larger communal violence. He suggested that rising levels of air pollution and natural disasters caused by climate change could trigger future conflicts.

The first session, divided into two half, focused on government and environmental peacebuilding in Nepal. In a discussion hosted by Ranjan Prakash Shrestha, president of HiUSAN, Dr. Bishnu Raj Upreti, Nepal's first Ph.D. scholar on environmental conflict and a widely regarded ac-

ademic, explored the significance of environmental peacebuilding in the context of Nepal.

Over-exploitation of natural resources has compounded the environmental disaster confronting Nepal in particular, as well as the entire world. Carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere have risen due to anthropogenic factors such as industry, agriculture, and the use of fossil fuels, resulting in glaciers melting, increasing sea levels, species extinction, and extreme weather events such as irregular floods and droughts. Tensions and conflict result from the insecurity, uncertainty, and psychological stress caused by all of these situations.

Nepal's biggest concern, he says, is encouraging environmental peace. Dr. Upreti believes that Nepal must develop measures to address institutional issues, environmental inequality, and environmental governance.

He believes that the government should start with a bottom-up and top-down approach to environmental peacebuilding. Dr. Upreti commended the planners for taking such an important step.

"Nepal is one of the most vulnerable countries in terms of climate change." More research is needed to better understand the local dynamics. As the first session concluded, Ranjan Shrestha stated, "We will hold events in the future."

In introducing his paper, "Governance Conflicts in Federal Nepal: Prospects for Peacebuilding," Prakash Bhattarai of The Center for Social Change noted how conflicts of all kinds are becoming increasingly common in Nepal. He claimed that 400 to 500 minor problems with people and wildlife, garbage dumps and landfills, and water are documented at the local level. He added that the conflicts are now being reported at the federal level.

Pitamber Bnahdari, TU, utilized the current conflicts between Kathmandu Metropolitan





and the federal state as an example in Factors Affecting Peace and Sustainability in Post-Conflict Practices in Nepal. He projected that structural conflict would become more common in the future.

Professor Vishnu Prasad Pandey of Pulchowk Engineering College gave a presentation titled “From Water Conflict to Water Cooperation: Prospects for Nepal.” He underlined the progression of water conflicts from the local community to the bilateral boundary, as well as the difficult nature of water-sharing considerations.

The Ganges River starts in Nepal and flows through India. India receives around 224 billion meters of water from Nepal’s four large, five medium, and countless other southern river systems. This water benefits India in terms of flood disasters as well as a variety of beneficial applications. Water has been and continues to be a major topic of discussion between Nepal and India.

Pitamber Aryal’s talk at the second session focused on climate change, the frequency of catastrophic events, and the effects

on Nepalese society. Every year, floods, landslides, fires, thunder-

the neighborhood would worsen.

The second session fo-

cused on encouraging environmental peace in Nepal. Pitamber Aryal of Tribhuwan University moderated a discussion on Climate Change: Occurrences of Catastrophic Events and Their Impact on Nepalese Society. Aarogya Dahal from TU gave a study on Chang-

es in Water Consumption Patterns and Urban Areas and their Effects on the Socio-Cultural Values of Hiti.

Riyan Karki presented a paper on local manifestations of positive peace and environmental

sustainability: evidence from Nepal. Naresh Rimal also presented a paper on the silent and ecological disaster in Nepal’s cultural post.

As Nepal and Japan commemorate the 120th anniversary of international student exchanges between their two countries, Hiroshima

University is initiating a critical research endeavor to benefit Nepal.



of disasters and catastrophes. He prophesied that the squabbles in

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- तीन बर्षको उमेरसम्ममा बालबालिकाको ८० प्रतिशत मस्तिष्क विकास भइसकन्छ।
- उनीहरूले खाने हरेक खानाको ७५ प्रतिशत भाग मस्तिष्क निर्माणमा उपयोग हुन्छ।
- बालबालिकासँग १५ मिनेट खेल्नाले मस्तिष्कको हजारौं कोषिकाहरू चलायमान बनाउन सकिन्छ।
- बालबालिकाको सन्तुलित खाना र हेरचाहमा ध्यान दिऔं।



नेपाल सरकार  
विज्ञापन बोर्ड





# सोचे जस्तै

## बैंक खाता



### बचत खातामा मुद्दतीको प्रतिफल

- बचत तथा मुद्दतीमा उच्च ब्याजदर ।
- आफ्नो इच्छा अनुसार निश्चित रकम बचतमा पुगे पश्चात स्वतः मुद्दतीमा रकमान्तरण हुने ।
- लकर सुविधामा ५०% छुट ।\*
- कागजी प्रक्रिया बिना मोबाइल बैंकिङ्गको माध्यमबाट त्रुण लिन सकिने ।
- ३ वर्षलाई निःशुल्क डेबिट कार्ड, मोबाइल बैंकिङ्ग तथा इन्टरनेट बैंकिङ्ग सेवा ।\*



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