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OPINION
Dipak Gyawali



FORUM
Hanan Goder-Goldberger



VIEWPOINT
Sewa Lamsal

NEW SPOTLIGHT

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June 14, 2024

FORTNIGHTLY

400 KV TRANSMISSION LINE A Historic Milestone

INSIDE



BEEN
At National Level



SAMRIDDI: IFAD AND MOICS
Transformation of Subsistence
Agriculture Through Women



INTERVIEW
Susheel Chandra Acharya

हिमाल स्टील
DUCTYL 500D

जिविजो जगि, बजिजो जगि

बढी
हिमालले सुरक्षित घर बनाउँछ ।



१००% गुणस्तर परीक्षण । लीडशेडिङना पनि निरन्तर उत्पादन । ७६ डिग्री आफर्ट याद्विको स्थानमा नेपालगढि तुरुन्तै डेलिभरी हुने । निर्माणकर्ताको पहिलो योजना । पारदर्शी वजन र गुण



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Nepal has undergone significant transformations in the generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity, regardless of personal preferences. The commendable progress can be attributed to Kul Man Ghising, the Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), who has efficiently executed the vision of transforming Nepal into a nation with surplus internal energy and the ability to export it. Supported by political leadership, Mr. Ghising has swiftly achieved this goal, with the completion of the historic 400 kV Inaruwa-Dhalkebar transmission line during his second tenure. Furthermore, the ongoing construction of the 400 kV Dhalkebar-Hetauda section, despite a few obstacles, will revolutionize Nepal's East-West transmission capacity, enabling the transmission of over 4000 MW compared to the current 200 MW. With the imminent completion of the 400 kV Dhalkebar-Hetauda transmission line and the successful establishment of the 400 kV Inaruwa-Dhalkebar line, Nepal is taking a significant leap forward in its transmission capabilities.

The demand for electricity has risen in tandem with the increase in power generation. Nepal's GDP will undergo a significant transformation with NEA's endeavor to replace the 132 kV East-West transmission line. Despite the growth in electricity generation, the east-west transmission line in Nepal remains at 132 kV. However, the completion of the Inaruwa-Bardibas 400 kV transmission line project, led by MD Ghising and NEA's team, will revolutionize power supply and distribution in Nepal. Recognizing the significance of this achievement, we have chosen to feature it as our cover story.

Keshab Poudel

Editor

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PM Prachanda Attended The Swearing-in Ceremony Of Indian PM Modi

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' paid a courtesy call on Prime minister of India Narendra Modi. During the meeting, both the leaders stressed the need to further strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries.



Earlier Prime Minister Prachanda attended the swearing-in ceremony of the Prime Minister of

India Narendra Modi along with other leaders from South Asia.

Prime minister Prachanda left Nepal on Sunday to attend the ceremony at the invitation of Prime Minister Modi. Prime Minister Dahal is likely to held bilateral talk with Indian Prime Minister Modi and other high level officials in New Delhi today.

Upon reaching New Delhi-based Indira Gandhi International Airport today, Prime Minister Prachanda was received by special representatives of the Government of India, according to the Ministry of External Affairs, India.

Modi, who has been appointed the Prime Minister of India for the third term on behalf of the Bharatiya Janata Party, is scheduled to take an oath of office and secrecy this evening. Following the swearing-in ceremony of Modi, Prime Minister Prachanda will meet his Indian counterpart, according to the Nepali Embassy in New Delhi.

The Prime Minister is accompanied by his daughter and private secretary Ganga Dahal, Minister for Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs Padam Giri, Foreign Secretary Sewa Lamsal, and other senior government officials during the visit. He is scheduled to return home on Monday.

2024 K-Culture Day Held In Kathmandu

The Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Nepal held the '2024 K-Culture Day' including '2024 Quiz on Korea in Nepal', '2024 Korean Speech Contest', and 'K-Culture Experience Event' at the Hotel Himalaya on Friday, June 7, 2024. All Korean

culture enthusiasts were welcomed at the K-Culture Day in Kathmandu.



Date and place: Friday, June 7, 2024, 9:00 am to 10:30 am, Hotel Himalaya Grand Ballroom

Content: A quiz

competition to compete for knowledge about Korea, and the winner of this competition will be given the privilege of participating in the final to be held in Korea in September 2024 as a representative of Nepal. (The final round in Korea will be pre-recorded and broadcasted on KBS on October 9, on the occasion of 'Hangeul Day'.)

Participants: 45 Nepalese people with general knowledge about Korea and Korean language proficiency who passed the first preliminary round.

2024 Korean Speech Contest

Date and place: Friday, June 7, 2024, 10:40 am to 12:00 pm, Hotel Himalaya Grand Ballroom

Contents: Speech in Korean language under the theme of "The role of youth in the development of bilateral relations commemorating the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Korea and Nepal."

First, second, and third place winners presented with the Embassy certificates and prizes.

Participants: 10 Nepalese with excellent Korean language proficiency who passed the first preliminary round. K-Culture Experience (Free entry for general public)

UN Resident Coordinator Handover Secretary General Invitation To Prime Minister of Nepal For The Summit Of The Future: Meaningful Youth Mobilization A Key Focus Of The Summit

The UN Resident Coordinator in Nepal Madam Hanaa Singer Hamdy handed over a letter from the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to the Prime Minister of Nepal, Pushpa Kamal Dahal for the upcoming Summit of the Future.



The letter urges support and requests for the personal participation of the Prime Minister in the Summit of the Future taking place on the 22 and 23 September in New York.

In the letter, the Secretary-General underscored the crucial importance of arriving at an ambitious, concise, action-oriented Pact for the Future as the summit's outcome. The pact has five pillars- finance for sustainable development; international peace and security; science, technology, and innovation; youth and future generation; and reform global governance.

Speaking at the occasion, the UN Resident Coordinator Hanaa Singer Hamdy said, "The Summit of the Future is a unique opportunity to change course and move away from the precipitous state the world is currently in and Nepal can leverage its exten-

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sive experience in climate action, conflict resolution, and disaster readiness to lead discussions on strategic importance and peace.”

In preparation for the summit in Nepal, the UN Resident Coordinator also met the Honorable Minister for Youth and Sports Biraj Shrestha to mobilize the youth of Nepal through nationwide consultations and a digital advocacy campaign aiming to reach 1 million youth in Nepal fostering broader engagement and support for the summit’s goals.

Embassy Of India In Nepal Celebrates The World Environment Day

The Embassy of India in Nepal in collaboration with the Metropolitan Municipality of Lalitpur organized a tree plantation ceremony on 5th June 2024 to celebrate World Environment Day.



Nawal Kishor Sah Sudi Minister of Forest and Environment, Government of Nepal, Chribabu Maharjan, Mayor of Lalitpur Metropolitan City and the Ambassador of India to Nepal participated in this special plantation

drive near Chardham Temple Parisar, Sankata Bridge, Ward No. 1, Lalitpur, Nepal.

Several political representatives, government officials, social workers and environment enthusiasts participated in the event, highlighting the shared commitment for the protection and preservation of the environment.

The Ambassador of India to Nepal, in his address, highlighted that the special event had been organized especially on the occasion of the World Environment Day to raise awareness about the importance of protecting the environment and to encourage individual and collective efforts to safeguard it for future generations. 150 trees were planted by the participants during the event.

Foreign Secretary Lamsal Met UN Secretary-General

Foreign Secretary Sewa Lamsal on Tuesday paid a courtesy call on UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in New York, the United States.

The Nepal Mission to the UN in New York stated that discus-



sions were held on the Nepal-UN partnership, Nepal’s graduation from the LDC category, UN’s contribution to Nepal’s development efforts, issues related to climate change and the importance of effective multilateral-

ism, among other issues.

Foreign Secretary Lamsal is in the US to attend the General Debate of the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) on behalf of the groups of LDCs.

Likewise, Secretary Lamsal has congratulated SIDS for adopting an ambitious and action-oriented blueprint and expressed LDC’s solidarity with SIDS.

She underlined the high cost paid by the countries in special situations due to climate change and urged the international community to support them, according to the Nepal Mission to the UN in New York.

Chief Justice Shrestha Addressed International Conference In Dhaka

Chief Justice Bishowambhar Prasad Shrestha delivered a keynote address as the Guest of Honor at the “International Conference on Judiciary Across the Borders: 21st Century Challenges and Experiences from the Himalayas and Beyond” being held in Dhaka.

The program held on 7-8 June 2024.

In his address, Chief Justice Shrestha underscored that the Constitution of Nepal guarantees the right to justice as a fundamental right and judicial independence as a core value. While highlighting the crucial components of judicial reform aimed at enhancing fairness, efficiency, and public trust, he stressed the ongoing preparations to formulate the 5th five-year strategic plan of the Judiciary.

He also underlined some significant decisions made by the Supreme Court of Nepal in safeguarding constitutionally guaranteed rights in diverse areas including food security, health rights, and social justice. He reiterated Nepal’s commitment to ensuring access to justice through robust legal and institutional mechanisms, with the broader goal of achieving social transformation and establishing an egalitarian society based on the principles of participation and inclusion.



French Embassy and DCIS organize a two-day International Seminar on Fighting Poaching and Wildlife Trafficking

The French Embassy and the French Directorate of International Security Cooperation (DCIS) organized a two-day International Seminar on the Fight Against Poaching and Wildlife Trafficking in Kathmandu on May 29-30, 2024.

The seminar brought together participants from the Nepali Army, Nepal Police, Armed Police Force, Nepal’s Ministry of Forests and Environment, Nepal’s Office of the Attorney General, as well as representatives from Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan,



Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Maldives, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, USA, France's Central Office for Coordinating Environmental and Public Health Crime (O.C.L.A.E.S.P), French Customs and UNODC.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Leela Devaradjalou, Chargé d'Affaires a.i., thanked the Government of Nepal for facilitating the organization of the seminar and noted the importance of the cause, saying, "the level of participation from 13 countries clearly illustrates the need for such events" and that "the consequences of attacks on wildlife are immense and can be irreversible."

Brigadier General Sanjay Deuja from the Nepali Army's National Park and Wildlife Conservation Directorate highlighted the Nepali Army's efforts in combatting poaching in national parks. "The Nepali Army remains steadfast in its commitment to preserving our nation's rich biodiversity and natural heritage. Our dedicated personnel work tirelessly to protect endangered species and from the plague of poaching and illegal wildlife trafficking," he stated.

Fabrice Cotelte, Police Attaché for Nepal, concluded the seminar by stressing the need to consolidate the links forged over the last two days in order to fight environmental criminals more effectively.

Foreign Secretary Lamsal Attended Several Meetings Of SIDS4

Foreign Secretary and the Head of the Nepali Delegation to the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4) Ms. Sewa Lamsal paid a courtesy call on Everly Paul Chet Greene, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, Trade & Barbuda Affairs of Antigua & Barbuda today.

Discussion during the meeting covered Nepal-Antigua and Barbuda relations, implementation of Internationally Agreed Development Goals, including Sustainable Development Goals, Doha Programme of Action, Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS.

They also expressed the need for solidarity among countries in special situations to fight against common global problems such as climate change.



The Conference is being held under the theme of "Charting the Course Toward

Resilient Prosperity" in St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda from 27 to 30 May 2024 and will conclude on 30 May 2024 with the official closing ceremony. The Foreign Secretary is scheduled to depart for Nepal on 30 May 2024.

Israel Continues Its Efforts To Bring Back 125 Hostages Including Bipin Joshi From Hamas Captivity

Israel's ambassador to Nepal, Hanan Goder, has demanded the unconditional release of all 125 hostages, including Bipin Joshi, who were held captive by the terrorist group Hamas.

"The murderous events of 7th October will be remembered for every by every Israeli. Some of the photos from that day are exhibited here. I know they are shocking. I will add that the release of the remaining 125 hostages that are held until now by Hamas is one of the our major goals. We will continue to make any efforts and bring them safe home," said Ambassador Goder.



"Independence and Sovereignty are dear to any nation. In our case, it took us 2000 years to obtain it again. Israel is proud of what we have achieved during the period of 76 years."

On the occasion of Israel's 76th Independence Day, Ambassador Goder said that Israel's main goal is their liberation. He said that at a ceremony organized here on Thursday afternoon in the presence of Vice President Ram Sahay Prasad Yadav. He also expressed his commitment that Israel will continue to maintain peace and tolerance in West Asia.

Appreciating the bold step of the then Nepal government to establish diplomatic relations between Israel and Nepal in 1960, Ambassador Goder said that although Israel and Nepal are geographically far away, the relationship between the government and the people is strong.

The ceremony was attended by the Deputy Speaker, MPs, leaders of various political parties, former foreign ministers, Ambassadors and diplomats from the diplomatic missions based in Kathmandu, high-ranking officials from the Government of Nepal, industrialists, businessmen, senior media persons and other prominent people of the society.

On the occasion of Independence Day, photos of the damage caused in Israel by the extremist group Hamas eight months ago were displayed. Those pictures taken by Ziv Koren are proof of the inhumane activities of that group.

Swiss Agency For Development And Cooperation And Helvetas Nepal Signed Project Implementation Agreement To Implement TTDP

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The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Embassy of Switzerland in Nepal, and Helvetas Nepal have



signed a project implementation agreement to launch the Trail Based Tourism Project (TTDP) in Nepal.

The agreement was signed by Dr. Danielle Meuwly, Ambassador of Switzerland to Nepal, and Dr.

Prabin Manandhar, Country Director of Helvetas Nepal.

The TTDP project aims to rehabilitate 400 kilometers of trails, fostering community collaboration and enhancing economic development. By streamlining policies and boosting government cooperation, the project seeks to attract both domestic and regional tourists, celebrating local culture and natural beauty.

This initiative is not only focused on promoting tourism but also on creating jobs, stimulating local enterprises, and spreading economic benefits. TTDP is set to be a lifeline for the community, improving lives, preserving traditions, and securing a brighter future.

Nepalese Peacekeeper Honored posthumously At UN ceremony

UN Headquarters will observe the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers on Thursday, 30 May 2024.

In 1948, the historic decision was made to deploy military observers to the Middle East to supervise the implementation of Israel-Arab Armistice Agreements, in what became the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization.

Since that time, more than two million peacekeepers from 125



countries have since served in 71 operations around the world. Today, some 76,000 women and men are serving in 11 conflict zones across Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.

Nepal is the largest contributor of military and police personnel to UN peace operations with more than 6,000 now serving in Abyei, the Central African Republic of the Congo, Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Kosovo, Lebanon, Libya, the Middle East, Somalia, South Sudan, Western Sahara and Yemen.

During formal ceremonies at United Nations Headquarters, Secretary-General, António Guterres, will lay a wreath to honour all UN peacekeepers who have lost their lives since 1948. He will also preside over a ceremony in the Trusteeship Council Chamber, at which Dag Hammarskjöld Medals will be awarded posthumously to 64 military, police, and civilian peacekeepers, who lost their lives serving under the UN flag, including 61 who perished last year.

Among the peacekeepers to be honoured posthumously with the Dag Hammarskjöld medal is one from Nepal: L/CPL Bhupajit RAI, who served with the UN Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO).

The Secretary-General will also present the 2023 Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award to Major Radhika Sen, a military officer from India, who served with the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).

Created in 2016, the Award “recognizes the dedication and effort of an individual peacekeeper in promoting the principles of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security”.

In his message, the Secretary-General said: “Today we pay tribute to the more than 76,000 United Nations peacekeepers who embody humanity’s highest ideal: peace. Day in and day out, at great personal risk, these women and men bravely work in some of the most dangerous and unstable places on earth to protect civilians, uphold human rights, support elections and strengthen institutions. More than 4,300 peacekeepers have paid the ultimate price while serving under the UN flag. We will never forget them.”

Nepal-China Jointly Open 12 Border Points For Trade And Movements

Narayan Kaji Shrestha, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs led a Nepali delegation to the Tibet Autonomous Region of China, at the invitation of the Government of the People’s Republic of China, to attend as the Chief Guest of the joint reopening ceremony of all traditional border trading points between Nepal and China, organized at Chentang Town, Shigatse City, Tibet Autonomous Region this afternoon.

On the occasion, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Vice Chairman of Tibet Autonomous Region of the People’s Republic of China Silang Nima jointly declared reopening of allfourteen traditional border trading points between Nepal and China.

Speaking at the program as the Chief Guest, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Shrestha stated that this landmark decision will greatly contribute to make the daily lives of the bordering peoples easier and comfortable, facilitate cross-border trade, foster economic ties, and further elevate the exemplary bilateral relations.

Highlighting the huge potential of cooperation between Nepal and China’s Tibet Autonomous Region in such areas as trade, investment, tourism, among others, Honourable Mr. Shrestha stressed the need to develop a multidimensional connectivity

network for further facilitation of seamless cross-border movement of cargo and people. Likewise, he underscored the necessity to improve infrastructure at border areas, establish fully equipped laboratory for testing and accreditation, and expedite construction of port facilities in Nepal-China border.

While referring to notable progress in implementing some key decisions and agreements made during high-level meetings and discussions earlier, Honourable Mr. Shrestha thanked the Government of the People's Republic of China for its continuous support and cooperation to Nepal including the recent decision to provide free Chinese visa to Nepali nationals.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs underlined the need for enhancing cooperation in vital priority areas of Nepal's development such as trade, investment, technology transfer, hydropower, manufacturing, infrastructure development, tourism, agriculture, connectivity, culture, and education. He added that Nepal expects visible results in the fields of economic and development cooperation from China in coming days. He further stressed that both sides need to work to making

Visit Nepal Year 2025 in China a success by carrying out result-oriented joint activities, including in the Tibet Autonomous Region.

Speaking at the programme from the Chinese side, Silang Nima, Vice

Chairman of Tibet Autonomous Region of China, said that the joint reopening of the traditional border trading points characterises a historic moment in Nepal-China relations. While stating the close, warm, and friendly relationship between Nepal and China, Nima stressed the need to further enhance the bilateral ties and cooperation in coming days.

As per today's joint announcement, seven traditional border points located in Dolpa, Mustang, Gorkha, Dolakha, Taplejung, and Sankhuwasabha will remain opened from today. The remaining traditional border points will be reopened phase-wise as per the practice before Covid-19 pandemic.

The Nepali delegation members led by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs included Hikmat Kumar Karki, Chief Minister of Koshi Province; Krishna Prasad Dhakal, Joint Secretary and Head of the North East Asia Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Navaraj Dhakal, Consul General, Consulate General of Nepal, Lhasa; and other senior officials of the Government of Nepal.

Ambassador Goder Encourages Nepalese Educators To Acquire Innovative Early Childhood Education Techniques From Israel

A Group Of 14 teachers from Nepal Are Departing For Israel to take part in an early childhood education and develop-

ment course.

Israel Government Offered Scholarship To 14 Nepalese Teachers For An International Course on "Innovative Approaches to Early Child Education and Development.

Hanan Goder Goldberger, Ambassador of Israel to Nepal, said that education is key to the development of the country.

Ambassador Hanan Goder Goldberger emphasized the importance of education in the country's development during a reception program he hosted at the ambassador's residence.

He mentioned that individuals from various countries, such as India, are also participating in the course.

The reception program was hosted by him at his residence to bid farewell to the 14 Nepali Participants of the International Course on "Innovative Approaches to Early Child Education and Development (May 26 – June 7, 2024)".

He stated that education must be prioritized. Ambassador Goder, who has been actively supporting Nepali students in Israel, mentioned that the participants can gain valuable knowledge during their time in Israel.

The Israeli government has been offering scholarships to Nepalese teachers in Early Child Education and Development for several years, benefiting many Nepali educators.

Kapil Dev Regmi, the Vice President of Shalom Club Nepal, shared his personal experiences of studying in Israel and encouraged new trainers to bring back innovative ideas from their time there.

Ramesh Khanal, the former ambassador of Nepal to the Federal Republic of Germany, who was stationed in Israel during the early stages of establishing the Nepalese Embassy, described Israel as a stunning country with diverse geography.

Khanal, a former diplomat, also emphasized that Israel is a secure and democratic nation. Additionally, during the event, photos of Bipin Joshi, a Nepali student, who has been held hostage by Hamas terrorists since last October, and photos of ten Nepalese students, who were killed by Hamas Terrorists, were displayed.



BUSINESS BRIEF

IFAD And IOM Celebrated The Vital Contributions Of Migration In Supporting Nepali Families

United Nations agencies the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) celebrated the vital contributions of migrants – in the shape of the remittances they send home – in supporting Nepali families, rural communities, and the country's overall development at an event in Kathmandu.

The event, held to celebrate the International Day of Family Remittances, brought together key stakeholders from government, international organizations, and the private sector.

Remittances are critical in Nepal, estimated at US\$11 billion in 2023, accounting for 26.6 per cent of the country's GDP – more than the combined inflow of official development assistance and foreign direct investment to Nepal. Moreover, these flows have proved to be resilient through crises, including the 2015 earthquake and the COVID-19 pandemic.



“Remittances are often the first financial service used by migrants and their families offered by regulated providers. This is an opportunity to financially include them. Also, we know that in many cases, remittance senders or receivers are women – this again is an opportunity to design specific financial products and training that fit women's needs for furthering women's financial inclusion and economic empowerment,” said Pedro de Vasconcelos, Programme Manager, Financing Facility for Remittances (FFR) and IFAD's Senior Technical Specialist - Coordinator, FFR.

The year's theme for the international day emphasizes the importance of digital channels in making remittances faster, cheaper, and more accessible. Remittance costs to Nepal have been, and continue to be, low. The cost of sending US\$200 as a remittance to Nepal now averages 3.7 per cent (World Bank), closing in on the Sustainable Development Goal for remittance costs to average 3 per cent. Similarly, Nepal has made significant advancements in financial inclusion and in offering formal channels for remittance transfers.

“Formal financial inclusion in Nepal has risen significantly, from 61 per cent in 2014 to 90 per cent in 2022, driven by the adoption of digital financial services like digital wallets, now used by almost 19 million people. Yet vulnerable groups such as women, youth, undocumented migrants and rural populations are often left behind. We must come together to address these barriers and meet our commitments to both the Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Compact for Migration,” said Hanaa Singer, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Nepal.

The event featured comprehensive discussions on the impact of remittances on financial inclusion, with a focus on leveraging

savings, credit, and investment products to improve the lives of migrant workers and their families. It also showcased preliminary results from IFAD and IOM, highlighting collaborative efforts to digitize remittances, reduce costs, and achieve financial inclusion.

Roshan Cooke, IFAD Country Director for Nepal and Bhutan, noted that, “In Nepal it is estimated that remittances make up about 80 per cent of smallholder farm households income while only 20 per cent of income is earned from agriculture itself”. He announced the successful completion of the US\$50 million, seven-year SAMRIDDHI project with Nepal's Ministry of Industry, Commerce, and Supplies, which benefited rural households, migrants, and remittance receivers through financial inclusion and enterprise development.

IOM, which supports safe, orderly, and regular migration in Nepal, established its first Migrant Resource Centre, enhanced the migrant information management system and assisted the government in leading regional consultative processes. In collaboration with government and society, IOM engages Nepali diaspora and migrants through migration schools, migrant worker reintegration, and counter-trafficking efforts, aligning with Nepal's championing of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM)

“Nepal stands as a champion country of the GCM, which has a specific objective that focuses on promoting faster, safer, and cheaper transfer of remittances and fostering financial inclusion of migrants. IOM remains committed to supporting the implementation of the GCM actionable commitments, including efforts in promoting ethical recruitment, advocating for human rights in business, and building the capacities of the private sector to achieve these goals,” said Helene Fors, IOM Chief of Mission, Nepal.

Panel discussions throughout the event underscored the resilience that remittances help build among rural people. Migrants support their families in achieving the SDGs, and returnees use their accumulated savings and knowledge to invest back home, generating employment and fostering local development. The Central Bank of Nepal discussed the inclusion of remittances sent by international migrants, including Nepali students, in their financial strategies.

Highlights from the World Migration Report 2024 were presented, focusing on migration trends and the development impact of remittances.

Nepal Receives Rs.1200 Billion Remittance In The Last 10 Months

Nepali migrant workers sent home about Rs. 1,200 billion, a record high remittance amount, during the first 10 months of the current fiscal year 2023/24.

According to a current macroeconomic and financial situation report made public by Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) Monday, remittance inflows increased by 19.2 per cent to Rs. 1,198.6 billion in the first 10 months of the current fiscal year.

Despite increased inflow of remittance, the growth rate of remittance has decreased during the review period as compared to same period last year.

There was an increase of remittance inflows of 23.4 per cent in the same period of the previous year 2022/23.

Considering remittance inflows of the first 10 months, Nepal is likely to receive the highest amount of remittance this fiscal year.

Earlier, in the last fiscal year 2022/23, the country received remittance at Rs. 1,220.56 billion.

In the fiscal year 2013/14, Nepal received remittance of Rs. 543.29 billion, while in the fiscal year 2022/23, it reached Rs. 1,220.55 billion.

The country received remittance of Rs. 961.05 billion in the fiscal year 2020/21 and Rs. 1,007.3 billion in the fiscal year 2021/22 billion.

Over the past 10 years, the average annual growth of remittance inflows has been 11.13 per cent.



According to the report, in the US dollar terms, remittance inflows increased by 17.1 per cent to 9.02 billion in the review period compared to an increase of 13.4 per cent in the same

period of the previous year.

The report showed that remittance of Rs. 116 billion have been received in a single month from mid-April to mid-May 2024 of the current fiscal year.

However, Nepal received a record high remittance of around Rs. 137 billion in a single month from September 18 to October 17, 2023 of the current fiscal year.

In the review period, the number of Nepali workers, both institutional and individual, taking first-time approval for foreign employment stood at 374,887 and taking approval for renew entry stood at 237,893.

In the previous year, such numbers were 421,279 and 238,976 respectively.

Net transfer increased by 17.2 per cent to Rs. 1301.72 billion in the review period. Such a transfer had increased by 22.5 per cent in the same period of the previous year.

Foreign currency reserves to up

With the continuous improvement in remittance inflows, the external sector of the country has seen a further improvement.

According to NRB, gross foreign exchange reserves increased by 26.2 per cent to Rs. 1,942.4 billion in mid-May 2024 from Rs. 1,539.36 billion in mid-July 2023.

In the US dollar terms, the gross foreign exchange reserves increased by 24.2 per cent to 14.54 billion in mid-May 2024 from 11.71 billion in mid-July 2023.

Of the total foreign exchange reserves, reserves held by NRB increased by 28 per cent to Rs. 1,722.02 billion in mid-May 2024 from Rs. 1345.78 billion in mid-July 2023.

Reserves held by banks and financial institutions (except NRB) increased by 13.8 per cent to Rs. 220.38 billion in mid-May 2024 from Rs.193.59 billion in mid-July 2023, said the report.

The share of Indian currency in total reserves stood at 22.1 per cent in mid-May 2024.

Based on the imports of ten months of 2023/24, the foreign exchange reserves of the banking sector is sufficient to cover the prospective merchandise imports of 15.1 months, and merchandise and services imports of 12.6 months.

Similarly, the current account remained at a surplus of Rs. 193.25 billion in the review period against a deficit of Rs. 63.74 billion in the same period of the previous year.

In the US dollar terms, the current account registered a surplus of 1.45 billion in the review period against a deficit of 493.6 million in the same period last year.

Likewise, Balance of Payments (BOP) remained at a surplus of Rs. 392.64 billion in the review period against a surplus of Rs. 209.49 billion in the same period of the previous year.

In the US dollar terms, the BOP remained at a surplus of 2.95 billion in the review period against a surplus of 1.59 billion in the same period of the previous year, said the NRB.

BEEN And LMC Sign MoU



MOU Signing Ceremony between Lalitpur Metropolitan City (LMC) and BUILDING Energy Efficiency in Nepal (BEEN) Project held recently.

Chiri Babu Maharjan, Mayor of Lalitpur Metropolitan City and Usha Manandhar Maskey, Advisor - Policy, Governance and GESI of BUILDING Energy Efficiency in Nepal (BEEN), signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

The MoU is for the possibility and design of making the building energy friendly. The main work to be done as per the MoU is to prepare energy friendly design, create awareness to make the buildings constructed in the city energy friendly and increase internal capacity.

“The MoU is very important for LMC as it will help reduce the impact of carbon emissions after the construction of energy friendly buildings starts,” said Mayor Maharjan.

Babita Shrestha, Architect, LMC, delivered the welcome ad-

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dress. Suyesh Prajapati, Team Leader BEEN, delivered the statement on project introduction and BEEN's technical approach.

Dibya Acharya, Senior Architect, BEEN also spoke in the program. Om D Rajopadhaya, Consultant, Policy Advisor, BEEN also spoke in the program.

Santosh Khadka, Urban Planning Management Committee, thanked BEEN for supporting LMC in building technical capacity to implement the Energy Efficient Building Code.

Infosys Honored Global IME Bank Honored by Finacle Process Innovation Award

Global IME Bank Limited has been honored with Infosys Finacle's Process Innovation Award 2024.



Global IME Bank was honored as the best bank in the category of Integration of Security Deposit Locker Issuance and E-Commerce Card Issuance in the award program organized by Infosys Finacle.

Using Finacle for its core banking software, Global IME Bank is known as a safe and reliable bank with the latest services.

The bank informed that this honor received by Global IME Bank has given the bank more encouragement to provide safe and convenient banking services for everyone by using more innovative and advanced technology banking software in the future.

Global IME Bank is the first commercial bank in the private sector with a network of branches in all the districts of the country. The bank has 354 branch offices, 379 ATMs, 277 branchless banking services, 68 extension and revenue collection counters, and 3 foreign representative offices, providing excellent services to more than 4.6 million customers from more than 1,100 service centers.

The bank has been bringing in remittances from the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Malaysia, South Korea, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait, India, Jordan, Hong Kong and other countries and making a significant contribution to the economy of the country.

Commission For A New Phase Of Reforms At The Request Of The Federation, Collaboration Is Essential For Positive Policy Reforms And Stability: FNCCI

The Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) has positively taken the commitment of forming a commission for the new stage of reforms. The commission is in accordance with the demands of the Federation through the budget of the financial year 2081.82.

The budget presented by the Finance Minister Barshman Pun in the joint session of the Federal Parliament in this sense has some measures.

The federation held a macro-economic debate and for the first

time presented a demand for the formation of a commission to implement a new phase of economic reform program for the existing economic reform and long-term development and was continuously lobbying for this.

The Federation believes that a special plan for policy reform and stability will be formed with the participation of the private sector in the said commission.

Similarly, in the promotion of the federation, the government has also covered the issue of promoting the initiative to establish an investment company by collecting the savings of small businessmen. It seems that it will help in the revival of the ailing industry by encouraging small investors when the investment climate is not being created.

Similarly, the government has announced an investment decade in agriculture in the context of the federation's demand for an investment decade. Fruit farming in the mountains, highway-focused businesses, etc. are covered. But as the budget provisions are not enough to attract private sector investment in agriculture, more homework is needed.

The Federation's demand to develop Nepal as a special hub for weddings and gatherings in tourism promotion has been amended in the budget.

Likewise, the demand for assistance to the private sector for the construction of hill stations near the Indian border has been addressed. The federation is of the opinion that the government should provide access roads, electricity and water by adding education and health and tourism to it. The amount of funds for start-ups has been increased this time.



It is believed that the work will proceed according to the start-up policy made at the initiative of the federation. More homework is needed on project mortgage loans to start-ups. The initiative to build an information technology hub is positive.

But the budget has not spoken about the increasing frustration among the youth due to policy changes in the information technology and start-up sector. In the context of the continuous decline in the share of manufacturing industry in the GDP, the government failed to pay attention to the possibility of boosting morale with additional programs in the budget.

No concrete program has been found to reduce the impact of up-grading from least developed countries. It is a welcome step that the first priority of the budget is economic reform and promotion of the private sector.

The federation demanded a special program for the promotion of the private sector for economic transformation. Accordingly, it has been given first priority. But in order to implement the said priority, more homework is needed as only a few topics are included in the budget.

It is mentioned in the budget that the monetary policy will be brought in line with the budget. But in the budget, there are very few concrete programs that can be used by the private sector of the excess liquidity in the bank financial institutions.

In this perspective, monetary policy can be expected to increase the morale of the private sector, but it is necessary to prepare a solid foundation for it.

Regarding the changes in tax rates through the economic bill and the impact on the enterprise business, suggestions are coming from the federation members, district city industry associations, objective associations, and associate members. There is past experience that there will be complications during implementation and it will affect the overall business environment as well.

The arrangement made by the budget of any one year will be changed immediately and the effective law will be applied. In the absence of predictable policies, the existing investment has been curtailed, while foreign investment has not been able to come. The federation believes that the Ministry of Finance and related agencies will be ready to reduce the impact of policy changes.

Lack of political and policy stability, frequent changes in revenue rates, suspicious behavior towards investors, etc., have discouraged the private sector, which holds 81 percent of the economy.

FNCCI Koshi Launched Innovative Database System

The FNCCI Koshi Province has recently launched an innovative database system to collect data on the industrial labor market in the region.

This initiative, known as the Rapid Market Assessment, aims to enhance job opportunities within the industrial sector. The event was organized with the support of the Rural Enterprise and Remittance Project (RERP) under the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, and Supplies (MoICS), as well as the International Fund

for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and technical assistance from HELVETAS Nepal.



Participants at the event included Rajendra Raut, Chairperson of FNCCI Koshi, Saroj Prasad Guragain, Project Manager of RERP;

representatives from the Labour and Employment Office Biratnagar; officials from the Ministry of Industry, Agriculture, and Cooperative; local government employment coordinators; and other relevant stakeholders.

A live demonstration of the new web application showcased its capabilities in tracking and analyzing labor demand across various industries, followed by a feedback session.

President Raut emphasized the importance of bridging the gap between the increasing number of individuals seeking employment abroad and the local industries struggling to find skilled

workers. He stated that this database will play a crucial role in closing that gap by providing comprehensive information on employment needs.

Saroj Prasad Guragain highlighted the potential for the system to be further developed in the future, enabling job seekers to connect with available job opportunities, thereby benefiting both parties involved.

Sandip Poudel, the Team Leader of Samriddhi/HELVETAS Nepal, emphasized that the data collected through this system would assist FNCCI in formulating better policies and advocating for them with the government and other relevant stakeholders, backed by concrete evidence.

Poshraj Niraula, the Program Officer of Samriddhi, added that the implementation of the database system would also enable local governments to effectively direct vocational skills programs and plan accordingly based on the sectoral and occupational demand identified through the collected data.

Currently, the database system is undergoing testing in Koshi Province, with the participation of over 300 member industries and 39 FNCCI member organizations who will regularly update their labor needs. This user-friendly system provides valuable insights into the job market, required skills, job opportunities, and potential collaborations with industries. Its design aims to support government planning, development organizations, analysts, private sectors, trainers, and job seekers.

This innovative tool is anticipated to have a significant impact on enhancing the development and execution of apprenticeship training programs in the coming years. Through the establishment of collaborations between private sector entities and training institutions, it will facilitate the provision of more practical training opportunities and contribute to the efficient placement of individuals in jobs. FNCCI extends an invitation to all relevant parties to utilize this cutting-edge platform to foster the growth of the private sector and support various industrial endeavors.

Breakthrough of Second Tunnel At Kathmandu-Tarai/Madhes Expressway

Just a week after the first breakthrough of 1,633, there was a breakthrough of the 1,653-meter twin tube tunnel from Nijgarh to Kathmandu in Bakaiya Rural Municipality of Makwanpur under package no 2.



The breakthrough program was held in the presence of Defense Minister Hari Prasad Upreti, Chief of Army Staff (CoAS) Prabhuram Sharma, Defense Secretary Kiran Raj Sharma, Army Generals and other military and non-military personnel involved in the construction of the expressway.

Did Modi Lose Even When Winning?



BY: DIPAK GYAWALI

In the 2024 Indian general elections, did Modi snatch victory from the jaws of defeat or vice versa? Debate is rife and polarized, not just in India but also in Nepal. One view among those who dislike Modi is that he has indeed been humbled from the high absolute majority of 2019, that the Indian parliament is no longer opposition-less as before, that of course being a good thing for democracy. Another lot holds that he and his BJP might have slipped in the largest state Uttar Pradesh, but with total victory in the central belt states and inroads into the south – and the fact that not only has his National Democratic Alliance (NDA) won a comfortable majority overall but BJP's tally alone is bigger than that of the Congress-led I.N.D.I.A. alliance – Modi is very much unchallenged.

A waggish Indian social media posting put it succinctly: Modi and NDA are forming the government for the third consecutive term, an outstanding feat only Jawaharlal Nehru had managed previously; Congress doubled its seats and established Rahul Gandhi (with his foot march across India) as a genuine leader; regional parties like Akhilesh's Samajwadi in UP, Mamta's TMC in Bengal, and others in Maharashtra and the south have done remarkably well; and even the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) have emerged victorious with aspersions on their being tampered with quashed by the results. Indeed, a win-win for all that only the world's largest democracy could have assured!

The losers have been mainly the servile corporate media and their exit pollsters (with the exception of CSDS-related [Yogendra Yadav](#)) whose credibility is currently mud. But all said and done, it has been a climb-down for Modi and his bombastic rhetoric as well as personality cult build-up, a case of being a prisoner of his own hype. Nepalis who have closely followed India for many years – journalists like [Yubaraj Ghimire](#) and [Krishna Prasad Sigdel](#), political analysts like [Hari Sharma](#) [Bharat Dahal](#) and [Jason Vaidya](#) coming from different ends of the political spectrum – have chimed in with their views. Investigative journalists like [J.B. Punmagar](#) travelled from Sikkim through north Bihar and UP to Uttarakhand and Delhi before the elections to gauge the Indian public mood and came to practically the same (accurate) conclusion as Yogendra Yadav. Less formally, Nepalis have spoken with friends and relatives across the border in UP, Bihar, Sikkim, Delhi and other places in India, and have their own stories to share why Modi and his BJP failed to live up to the hype. And the gist of all that is as follows.

Showman Hubris: Democracy is about attracting the masses, and nothing succeeds like Bollywood which permeates India's social life. But it takes you only so far – as has been seen in the other Hollywood-based democracy too.

Lack of effective opposition to Modi in the last ten years and over-reliance on the power of state power to manage roadshows bred within the BJP not just organizational complacency but self-hypnosis as well that prevented genuine grassroots concerns from filtering up to the top leadership.

Everything was built around the personality of Modi, with sycophants dominating the show within the party as well as the mainstream corporate media whose masters had a vested interest in preserving their crony capitalism interests linked to state power. That hubris had similarly crippled Indira Gandhi in 1977 ("Indira is India!", remember?), a lesson that BJP should have learned but seems to have forgotten.

Money Blindness: Money does play an important role in mass politics (just look at the PACs of the US!) to organize meetings, buy media time and so on; but it has its limits. It served Modi well in 2019 when he had decimated the opposition's war chest by his demonetization of Indian currency, making the opposition's cash hoard worthless paper. This time around, Modi not only introduced the dubious "electoral bonds" for slush money but also used state anti-corruption agencies to block legitimate bank accounts of the opposition. It forced the opposition to fall back on grassroots tactics (Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo padyatra) and moral issues of inclusive economic policies, leading to their success.

What he forgot – as per not just older Hindu Samkhya philosophy but also modern scholars of power such as [Steven Lukes](#) – was that power comes in three interlinked forms: coercive (tamasik) power of the state, persuasive power (rajasik) of the market, and the moral power (satwik) of genuine civic movements. And of these three, if one does not command the satwik power of moral heights, the other two become near useless. Mahatma Gandhi's tamasik and rajasik powers were negligible compared to that of the British Empire he was opposing; but his satwik power ultimately overwhelmed the Raj. Closer to our times, Modi should have remembered how Jayaprakash Narayan succeeded against Indira Gandhi in 1977 or Anna Hazare against Congress corruption in 2011.

Shifting voter loyalty: A Muslim activist friend in Gor-

akhpur explained to me how Modi massively won UP in 2019 without even putting up a single Muslim candidate where every fifth voter is a Muslim. Muslim men votes were split between Mayawati, Akhilesh or the Congress: Muslim women en masse voted for the BJP. Why? Well, anti-triple talaq legislation that empowered women! Alas, old merchandise cannot be sold twice, and they went back to voting for Akhilesh!

Voters, especially the young, were concerned more this time around with issues of unemployment and [growing income inequality](#) where India's massive economic growth has only favoured the rich and not the poor. Modi tampered with army recruitment with his Ag-niveer proposal. Despite expanding cooking gas access gift to the poor and so on, he has been less supporting of broader social-ist concerns and more a champion of big business interests. His proposal to corporatize agriculture would help the Adanis and cripple the small farmers and their rural mandis. That revolt was what the opposition effectively cashed in on.

Narrow Hindutva: Hinduism is really not a religion but a supermarket of many religions and paths that differ more from each other than Muslims differ from Christians. Modi and his BJP championed one brand that goes against the Hindu practices of others, including Tantrik/Shrivite/Buddhist-mixed Nepal, Bihar, Bengal, Assam and South India. His personalizing Ram Mandir at Ayodhya irritated even the Shankaracharyas. Even more serious it is whispered, the awarding of major construction contracts in Ayodhya and Varanasi to Amit Shah's Gujrati cronies angered small businesses across UP. BJP after all like its original avatar the Jan Sangh is a shopkeepers' party; and ignoring Yogi Adityanath's candidates in favour of Amit Shah's led to his and RSS stepping back with consequences we all see.

What would all this mean for Nepal in the days ahead?

Opinion is divided: Modi haters think his humbling come-uppance is a good thing for Nepal as it puts him and his Hindutva on a backfoot. Those who appreciate what he has managed to do for India but distrust him for his Nepal blockade and other policies think he might emerge more aggressive in the neighbourhood to pander to his domestic constituents. I fall in the latter category.

First, as so brilliantly mentioned by photo journalist and

businessman Bikas Rauniar at the J.B. Punmagar talk mentioned above, 1950 Treaty and EPG report notwithstanding, Modi government has put in place regulations that make it impossible for Nepalis to do business in India. That path a weakened Modi beholden to Bihari support will pursue more aggressively.

Second, BJP and RSS would like to see Nepal declared a Hindu state but without the King as "King does not listen or look after Indian interests". After all it was BJP Vajpayee government that molly-coddled the Noida Maoists against the King way back in June 2002 (despite his own foreign minister Jaswant Singh declaring them terrorists) as so brilliantly described by [S.D. Muni in Nepal in Transition](#). Modi will continue that policy of working with servile Nepali lampasarbadi politicians to further narrow Indian interests (with the support of the Congress which ultimately sidelined the monarchy), something that Nepal's traditionalists and monarchists have understood well but not

the parties or party-beholden media. Even within India, a broader Hindu resurgence will continue despite BJP and its narrow politicization, until a new ecumenical [Dara Shikoh](#) emerges to chart a synthesized syncretic path.

Third, his key ministers are a continuation, not a break from the past. Nor is his "coronation" ceremony at Rashtrapati Bahavan which is reminiscent of the [1911 Delhi Durbar](#): it is a reminder to the neighbourhood that India is a successor state to the British Raj sharing the same governance ethos with its colonial overtones. It expresses itself in a self-damaging Sinophobia vis-à-vis Nepal and Bhutan and Islamophobia as well that has led Modi to coddle close to Israel's Netanyahu against Global South opinion (supplying him arm that he uses in Gaza and Rafah). It has led to not just SAARC but other regional initiatives remaining comatose, which unless revived will not enhance India's international image. He has also pursued a policy of piggy-backing on the US to counter China, which has damaged India's standing among BRICS members as well as the Islamic world.

How Jaishankar's recent statements distancing India from the Indo-Pacific (when it comes to Russian oil) will play out, how a humbled Modi might be forced to be more realistic regarding the neighbourhood is yet to be seen. But with a lampasarbadi Nepali Loktantrick leadership, no bold diplomatic initiatives can be expected from this side!



400 KV TRANSMISSION LINE A Historic Milestone

The completion of the Inaruwa-Dhalkebar Transmission Line at 400 kV is a significant achievement for the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA). Under the leadership of Managing Director Kul Man Ghising, the NEA team has worked diligently to bring this project to fruition, marking a momentous milestone in Nepal's electricity history. With the establishment of key substations, including the 400 kV substation in Hetauda, MD Ghising's leadership has once again proven successful with the completion of this transmission line project.

By KESHAB POUDEL

Over the course of seven years, individuals with passion, dedication, and commitment can truly make a significant impact. Kul Man Ghising, the Managing Director of NEA, has exemplified this through consistent support from

minister and prime minister. Under his guidance, NEA has made remarkable progress in the generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity. One notable achievement is the completion of the 400 kV Dhalkebar-Inaruwa transmission

line, which stands as a testament to the transformative power of their efforts.

Additionally, the construction of the third largest 400 kV Hetauda substation has been finished, providing the necessary



infrastructure to transmit 4,000 MW of electricity.

Despite facing various challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, land acquisition issues, court orders, and local opposition, the completion of Nepal's largest 400 kV transmission line in the Dhalkebar-Inruwa section is a significant milestone.

With a capacity to transmit 4000 MW of electricity, this transmission line will greatly enhance the quality of electricity supply in the country, meeting internal demand and even allowing for the export of surplus electricity to India.

The successful construction of the third largest 400 kV Hetauda Substation marks a significant achievement, establishing the necessary infrastructure for transmitting 4,000 MW of electricity. The completion of this endeavor was made possible through unwavering dedication,

which involved regular site inspections and valuable guidance from Kul Man Ghising, the Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA).

MD. Ghising stated, "The establishment of the 400 kV Hetauda Substation at Makwanpur-11 Thanabhyang in Hetauda Subdivision has been finalized to enhance and expand the power transmission and distribution network across the nation."

The provision of reliable electricity is crucial for driving economic progress and enhancing the overall quality of life. This initiative is poised to significantly enhance the electricity supply in the area.

Nepal's energy development has faced numerous challenges, resulting in slow progress. These challenges include weak and inconsistent policies, the absence of an independent electricity

regulator, inadequate planning, limited public sector financing, and difficulties in land acquisition and right of way for transmission lines. As a result, Nepal struggles to meet its electricity demand, which is estimated to peak at around 2000 megawatts (MW).

However, there have been recent positive developments in the operational performance of the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA). Load shedding in the Kathmandu Valley and other major cities has significantly reduced, and measures to combat power theft have been implemented.

One notable achievement is the completion of the Dhalkebar-Inaruwa 400 kV transmission line. This section of the Hetauda-Dhalkebar-Inaruwa line aims to strengthen and enhance the reliability of the power transmission system within Nepal. Additionally, it aims to

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facilitate power trade between Nepal and India.

The construction of a 154 km 400 kV double circuit transmission line from Dhalkebar in Dhanusha to Inruwa Substation in Bhokraha Narsingh Rural Municipality-4 in Sunsari has also been successfully completed. This transmission line has the capacity to carry approximately 4,000 megawatts of electricity, further contributing to Nepal's power infrastructure.

The 288 km transmission line from Hetauda Substation to Inruwa Substation at Thanabhayang in Hetauda Subdivision-11 of Makwanpur has been split into two sections: Hetauda-Dhalkebar 134 km and Dhalkebar-Inaruwa 154 km.

The construction of the Dhalkebar-Inaruwa section has been finished, while the Hetauda-Dhalkebar section is currently under construction. MD Ghising emphasized that the completion of the Dhalkebar-Inaruwa section is a significant milestone

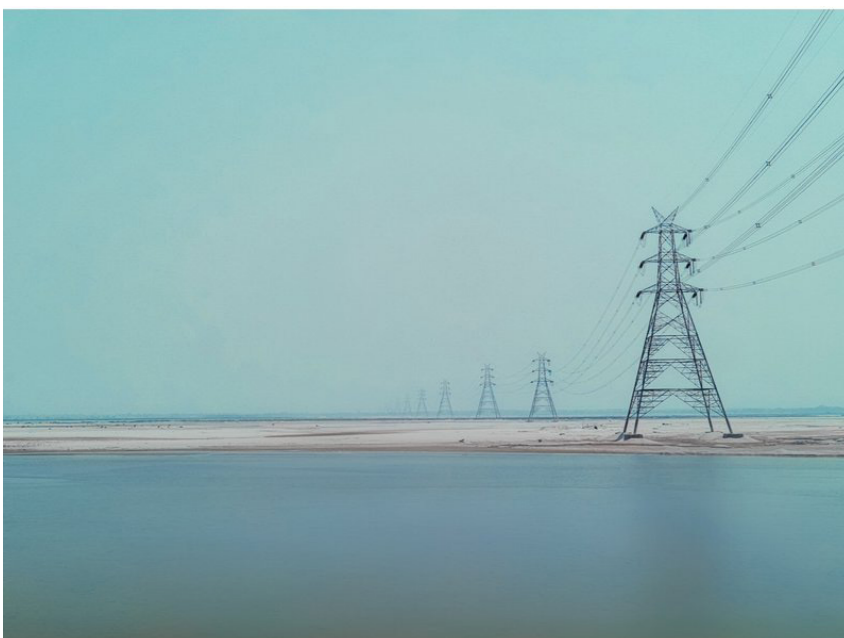


in enhancing the quality and reliability of the country's entire transmission system and boosting power trade between Nepal and India.

Due to the unpreparedness of our transmission infrastructure, the electricity import and export capacity through the operational Dhalkebar-Muzaffarpur international transmission line is

limited to 800 megawatts.

Any surplus electricity can be exported to India via the Dhalkebar-Inaruwa transmission line," stated MD Ghising. He also highlighted the challenges faced during winter when the existing 132 kV transmission line between Dhalkebar and Inaruwa struggled to handle the load, leading to operational issues.



A total of 417 towers were erected along the Dhalkebar-Inaruwa section of the transmission line. Among these, 11 towers were specifically constructed in the river to facilitate the passage of the transmission line to Saptakoshi.

The foundation for the 5 km transmission line on the Koshi River required a 24-32 meter deep pile foundation. Notably, one tower was supported by 16 pile foundations. Unfortunately, two years ago, the construction faced complications when a tower near the Koshi River was

swept away.

The Project Director, Shyam Kumar Yadav, highlighted various challenges that hindered the progress of the project, including the impact of the corona epidemic, flooding of the Koshi river, local opposition demanding a change in the route of the transmission line, a court order, forest land usage issues, and delays in obtaining tree-cutting permits.

Director Yadav also mentioned that due to a court order in the Siraha area, the project was halted for 4 years, leading to the need for three rounds of Preliminary Environmental Assessment (PEA).

Upon finalization, the 400 kV transmission line will have the capacity to enhance the voltage and power supply of the Morang-Sunsari industrial corridor. The Inruwa 400 kV substation was successfully completed and put into operation last year. To enhance the overall power supply to the Sunsari-Morang Industrial Corridor, the replacement of the old conductor of the Inruwa-Duhvi 132 KV transmission line with a high-capacity transmission line (HTLS) has commenced.

Enhancement in Morang-Sunsari

This upgrade will significantly increase the current capacity of the line, allowing it to transmit approximately 200 megawatts of electricity. Construction is underway for a 132 kV transmission line from Inaruwa

to Barju, as well as a 132 kV substation at Barju.

Proposals have been made for the Inruwa Substation to facilitate power trade with India through the Inruva-Purnia line, and for trade between Nepal,



that the Dhalkebar-Inaruwa section has been completed, all available manpower will be dedicated to the construction of the Dhalkebar-Hetauda section. Currently, the focus is on laying the transmission line wire from Dhalkebar to Hetauda, with 45 km already completed.

However, there have been obstacles in the construction process for the past 7 years, as some residents of Hetauda sub-metropolitan wards 15, 16, and 17 in the Hatia areas have been demanding a change in the transmission line route. As a result, 16 towers are yet to be constructed, with 14 in the Hatia area and 2 in Thanabhayang in Hetauda-11.

The Hetauda-Dhalkebar-Inaruwa transmission line project spans across the Hill, Shivalik Chure, and Terai regions. It passes through 10 districts, namely Makwanpur, Bara, Rautahat, Sarlahi, Mahottari, Dhanusha, Siraha, Saptari, Udaipur, and Sunsari.

The agreement was finalized in January 2069 to finish the construction within a span of 30 months. The Hetauda-Dhalkebar-Inaruwa 440 kV transmission line runs mostly parallel to the current 132 kV transmission line and the East-West highway.

India, and Bangladesh through the Inruwa-Anaramani 400 kV transmission line. The Korean Export Import (EXIM) Bank is offering concessional loans for the development of the Inruwa-Anaramani transmission line.

Yadav has announced that now

The transmission line's right-of-way measures 23 ÷ 23 meters on either side of the center. The project will involve clearing 518 hectares of forest and acquiring 30 hectares of private agricultural land. A total of 475 hectares of private land and 171 houses and

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other structures will be impacted within the right of way.

So far, approximately Rs. 5 billion has been allocated for right-of-way compensation for the Dhalkebar-Inaruwa segment. This initiative, with an estimated cost of US\$170 million, was launched as part of the Nepal-India Power Transmission and Trade Project, with contributions from the Nepalese government and authorities, as well as concessional loans from the World Bank.

The World Bank loan period has concluded, and now the government and authorities are investing in the remaining work. The completion of the 400 kV Hetauda Substation, the third largest in Nepal, will greatly enhance the power supply infrastructure, allowing for the transmission of 4,000 MW of electricity.

This development will not only meet the internal demand for power but also enable the export of surplus electricity to India. In recent weeks, NEA has made significant progress

by finishing two major projects with a combined capacity of over 4000 MW for power transmission from east to west.

MD Ghising stated that the construction of the 400 kV Hetauda Substation in Makwanpur-11 Thanabhayang, Hetauda subdivision, will strengthen and expand the power transmission and distribution system in the country.

NEA requires the assistance of local political leaders, elected representatives, and local administration to eliminate the hindrance in Hetauda, enabling Nepal to establish a power transmission system from east to

west. According to MD. Ghising, as progress is being made in this area, it will soon be finalized.

For a dependable and high-quality east-west power supply in the country and for power exchange with India, the Dhalkebar Substation is the primary automatic substation in Nepal, followed by Inaruwa as the second, and Hetauda as the third largest substation in the nation. The 400 kV Hetauda substation, Nepal's third largest, utilizing Gas Insulated System (GIS) technology, has been successfully completed and inaugurated on Friday (June 7, 2024).

Furthermore, the construction of 220 and 132 kV substations at Thanabhayangmani under the Nepal-India Electricity Transmission and Trade Project has also been finished and inaugurated on the same day.

The completion of the Hetauda Substation has resulted in the establishment of an infrastructure capable of providing approximately 4,000 MW of electricity.

Following the completion of the Hetauda-Dhalkebar-Inruwa 400



kV transmission line project, it will be possible to transmit 4,000 MW of electricity from Dhalkebar in the east to the west. The construction of the Dhalkebar-Inaruwa section of the 400 kV transmission line is currently in its final stage, while the Hetauda-Dhalkebar section is still under construction.

However, the construction of the transmission line is facing obstacles due to the opposition of local residents in wards 15, 16, 17, and 11 of Hetauda sub-metropolitan city. The construction will proceed in areas where there are no such obstacles.

Ghising, the Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), has stated that the power will be supplied locally from the Hetauda Substation, which will contribute to a more reliable and higher quality power supply in Hetauda, Bharatpur, Simra, and Birgunj regions.

MD Ghisingh has stated that the hydropower projects in the central region of Nepal will contribute to the national transmission grid and any excess power can be exported to India through the Hetauda-Dhalkebar 400 kV transmission line.

This will greatly facilitate the

power flow. Shukar Devkota, the project manager, has mentioned that the Hetauda substation has been designed to accommodate future expansions based on requirements. The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) will construct the 400 kV double circuit transmission line from Ratmate in Nuwakot, which will be connected to the Hetauda substation.

Devkota also confirmed that the necessary infrastructure has been completed at the Hetauda substation. The construction of the Hetauda, Dhalkebar Inruwa 400



kV transmission line is part of the National Electricity Development Decade Program and has been jointly funded by the government and NEA.

The completion of all three substations under the project has been achieved. In December 2018, a contract agreement was signed for the construction of the Hetauda 400 kV substation.

In December 2018, the contract was

awarded for the construction of the Hetauda substation, which operates at 220-132-11 kV. The Nepal India Electricity Transmission and Trade Project, in collaboration with the government and the authority, along with a concessional loan from the World Bank, undertook the construction of the Hetauda substation. The estimated cost for the Hetauda substations, operating at 400, 220, and 132 kV, amounts to three billion rupees.

The construction progress has faced challenges due to the global spread of the corona epidemic and the subsequent restrictions imposed to control and prevent it. As a result of the epidemic, there were delays in

the arrival of various equipment and technicians required for the substation connection, leading to delays in the project's construction for other reasons as well.

Despite these obstacles, the NEA has successfully accomplished two significant tasks in recent weeks, which will have a positive and lasting impact on the national economy.

Nagmati Is The Key For Reviving The Cultural, Spiritual And Natural Bagmati River

SUSHEEL CHANDRA ACHARYA, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, emphasized the importance of Nagmati in reviving the cultural, spiritual, and natural aspects of the Bagmati River. According to studies, storing water in Nagmati and releasing it during the dry season is a viable solution to augment the water level in the river. In an interview with NEW SPOTLIGHT, Acharya discussed the project and its significance. Except:

Could you please explain the Nagmati project as there are people who are against its construction?

The Bagmati River Basin (BRB) holds great cultural and economic importance. The water that flows through the Bagmati River is considered sacred and is utilized for various cultural and ceremonial practices in the numerous significant temples situated along its banks. This river passes through Kathmandu, which serves as the administrative and economic hub of the country and acts as Nepal's gateway to tourism.

Unfortunately, the Bagmati River and its tributaries suffer from poor water quality due to the discharge of untreated or inadequately treated domestic sewage, untreated industrial effluent, and the dumping of solid waste, all of which contribute to the degradation of the river system. The scarcity of water, absence of sewage treatment plants, and the dumping of solid waste have led to a significant decline in water quality. Additionally, the deterioration of cultural and heritage sites is a growing concern.

To address these issues, the Bagmati River Basin Plan was developed by WECS, and the Water Resources Development Plan estimated the future water demand based on population growth projections. However, solely relying on the Melamchi project is insufficient to bridge the gap between water demand and supply in the Kathmandu Valley. Therefore, the BRB project has explored alternative water resource development projects based on different scenarios. It is worth noting that the groundwater level around the Bagmati River is progressively decreasing year after year.

Therefore, the only option available to save the Bagmati River is a reservoir that will retain the excess wet season runoff for release during the dry season. A detailed assessment was carried out to determine the required storage of the new reservoirs to achieve the perennial flow and water quality targets at Gokarna and Pashupatinath, at least bathing standard.

What are the benefits of the Nagmati Dam in terms of increasing the volume of water in Kathmandu?

The Nagmati Dam Project (NDP) consists of a CFRD with a height of 94.5m, length of 554m and crest width of 7m. The construction of the dam will create a reservoir expanded in an area of 480,426 m² at FSL with a storage capacity of 9,484 Mm³ at FSL. The regulated water flow of 450 LPS will be used for augmentation of dry season flow of Bagmati. Thus, the increased volume of water will be used for:

- Improving the water clarity, odor and visual cleanliness of the river;
- Maintaining water quality at Gokarna and Pashupatinath religious sites with minimum flow of 0.45 m³/s throughout the year.
- Maintain a minimum flow throughout the year based on the ecological environmental flow requirement of the Bagmati River;
- Increase the benefits of the project by generating hydropower from the diverted discharge into the Bagmati River at Sundarijal;
- Provide additional potable water to Kathmandu Upatyaka Khane Pani Limited through the Melamchi Water Supply Project during the monsoon season; and
- Contribute to the groundwater recharge of Kathmandu.

Are there any alternatives?

An alternative to dam construction on the Nagmati or Bagmati rivers is inter-basin transfer from another river system. Considering the time required to plan, design and implement an inter-basin transfer, the most favorable option would be to use water from the Melamchi Tunnel, if possible.

The Melamchi Project involves the construction of an approximately 27 km long diversion tunnel to divert 170 MLD of raw water from the Melamchi River to the Sundarijal Outfall, where the raw water will be treated. As the first phase of the WWTP project, the detailed design of the WWTP capacity was completed for 170 MLD with provision for future expansion. The plant will be developed in three phases of 170 MLD each to achieve a final WWTP capacity of 510 MLD. However, the water demand forecast by KUKL showed a daily demand of more than 800 MLD for the Kathmandu Valley. Even if the 3 phases of the Melamchi project are completed on time, a significant gap will remain. Since the water scarcity in the Kathmandu Valley will persist even after Melamchi becomes operational, the likely scenario is that no water will be available to augment the low flow in the Bagmati River during the dry season. Therefore, the inter-basin transfer alternative was not considered feasible in any foreseeable future.

If the project is so important, why has it taken so long to start construction?

The EIA report was prepared and submitted for approval to the



then Ministry of Population and Environment in 2015. This report was prepared and updated in accordance with the newly promulgated EPA, 2076 BS and EPR, 2077 BS incorporating necessary comments/suggestions received from Shivapuri National Park, DNPWC and Ministry of Forests and Environment by the consultant on behalf of the project proponent.

A feasibility study on the proposed Nagmati Dam was carried out by the Danish Hydraulic Institute (DHI) in 2012-2013. This was undertaken as an Asian Development Bank (ADB) technical assistance project, TA 8050. The water balance modeling for the Bagmati River Basin undertaken by this study assessed the required release from the Nagmati Dam. An extended study was conducted by Entura for the NDP in 2016. Due to the sensitivity of the dam, the project has to conduct a detailed study regarding the safety of the dam, as it is located in the Shivapuri National Park, it also took considerable time to proceed with the EIA report.

The civilization of the Kathmandu Valley is closely linked to the water of the Bagmati River. Can you provide information on the current flow of water in the river?

During the dry season, the entire flow of the upper Bagmati River is diverted for domestic use, leaving no flow for the downstream river environment. The Bagmati River has become a “dead river” due to severe water scarcity in the dry season and lack of wastewater treatment facilities. Water scarcity, lack of wastewater treatment plant and solid waste dumping have caused severe degradation of water quality, deterioration of cultural and heritage site.

For water resources development, future water demand was estimated based on population growth projections. Melamchi alone is

not sufficient to bridge the gap between water demand and supply in the Kathmandu Valley. Groundwater in the vicinity of the Bagmati River is also declining at an alarming rate.

Upstream watershed degradation is also contributing to the decline in river flow and groundwater recharge. Declining water levels are observed in most of the monitored wells. The northern groundwater district has the maximum decline of 1.7 m/yr. The southern groundwater district has the lowest decline of 0.7 m/yr. However, this is likely to change in the near future as many large housing complexes are planned in the south.

Given that the flow of water in the Bagmati River is virtually non-existent for eight months during the dry season, which adversely affects cultural and religious activities, what measures can be taken to increase the volume of water in the Bagmati River?

The Bagmati River consists of several temples, cultural site, and crematorium along the banks. The culture and civilization of Kathmandu valley is connected with Bagmati River. It is a holy river. So purification of Bagmati, augmentation of water to minimum requirement as mentioned earlier is an urgent requirement. For this, there are no significant measures except collecting water of the rainy season and releasing it in the dry season. The Melamchi diversion will only be for domestic water supply as discussed earlier.

Given that the Kathmandu Valley is experiencing rapid population growth and is an unplanned city, how challenging is it to effectively manage the three main rivers that sustain life in the area?

INTERVIEW

River management in the Kathmandu Valley is indeed a major challenge due to several factors including population growth, unplanned settlements and urbanization. As the population grows, so does the demand for land, housing and infrastructure, often resulting in encroachment on riverbanks and floodplains. Improper waste disposal, industrial effluents and untreated sewage discharge contribute to water pollution, affecting both the environment and public health. River management in the Kathmandu Valley is often hampered by a lack of integrated planning and coordination among different stakeholders, including government agencies, local authorities, and communities. Fragmented governance structures and conflicting priorities can impede effective river management efforts. Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that integrates land use planning, infrastructure development, environmental protection, community engagement, and sustainable water management practices, which is what the Bagmati Action Plan is implementing.

What is the current status of the Bagmati River Integrated Project?

Bagmati River Basin Improvement Project (BRBIP) is under the Ministry of Urban Development and WE, MoEWRI/DWRI, are only the implementers of Output 3 of the project which is limited to construction of dams in Shivapuri/Nagarjun area. However, the major achievements so far are 1) completion of Dhap dam and preparation of Nagmati dam, 2) completion of Bagmati river beautification works (package 1), 3) revival of old monuments, temples along the river corridor. 4) Construction of sewage treatment plants (ongoing at Teku), 5) Master plan based approach to cover all tributaries of Bagmati in Kathmandu valley.

What is the status of the Nagmati Project after the successful construction of the Dhap Dam, which has helped to raise the water level of the Bagmati River to some extent?

The Nagmati project is in the preparation stage. The Nagmati Dam Office has been established at DoWRI, Jawalakhel. EIA approval process is underway (now in MoFE for final approval). Land acquisition process is underway. The donor agency, ADB, has also prepared for loan management.

What is the significance of the Nagmati Dam project for augmenting the water level of the Bagmati River?

Nagmati will store about 9 Mm³ of water in a year and can flow 450 lps on a regular basis. This is almost twice the flow of the Bagmati River in the dry season. It will also contribute significantly to groundwater recharge. This project will not only provide water to the river, but will also generate power and supply to the Melamchi system during emergency maintenance or even during the monsoon season when the flow of the Melamchi River is uncertain. Three ministries have signed a memorandum of understanding for the integrated use of water released from the Nagmati dam.

Although some groups are lobbying against the project due to concerns about the risky nature of the dam, what is the technical justification for the project?

Dam failure can be catastrophic. Due to the location of an intense seismic zone, a large settlement and a very important religious and cultural site downstream along the river bank, its depth of study, safety parameters and robust design are primary requirements and need serious attention. This has been well and adequately considered during project preparation of Nagmati dam project. A site-specific seismic hazard assessment has been carried out for the Nagmati Dam site; Based on ICOLD Bulletin 72 (ICOLD, 2010b), the following applies to dams in the Extreme category

Operating Basis Earthquake (OBE): this is a level of shaking at which there should be no or insignificant damage to the dam and associated structures.

Safety Evaluation Earthquake (SEE): This is a level of shaking for which damage can be accepted, but there should be no uncontrolled release of water from the reservoir.

SEE is the maximum magnitude of earthquake for which the dam should be designed (Note: SEE replaces MCE (Maximum Credible Earthquake) and DBE (Design Basic Earthquake) terminology used in previous editions of ICOLD Bulletins prior

to 2010).

A site-specific seismic hazard assessment was conducted for the Nagmati Dam site. Entura prepared the scope for the seismic hazard assessment study and through a competitive. Seismic Research Centre (SRC) of Australia to undertake the study. This was undertaken using both a deterministic and probabilistic approach. This study formed the basis of the seismic design loads adopted for the project.

Will the Nagmati Dam submerge all settlements, including Pashupatinath, in the event of a dam failure?

The safety requirement against seismic, geotechnical and hydrological hazard analysis has been done based on the well tested highest standard of safety. Likewise structural component of the dam has been designed so that such event will not happen and mentioned submergence will not happen in the mentioned extent.

Considering Nepal's location in a seismic zone, how resilient is the dam from technical point of view?

As a dam of extreme consequence category (ANCOLD, 2012), the highest standards of dam design have been adopted. Given the high seismicity of the site, a defensive seismic design has been adopted to ensure that the dam is resilient.



SIDS Deserve Stronger Attention



BY: SEWA LAMSAL

Let me begin by expressing our profound condolences to the Government and people of Papua New Guinea during this difficult time caused by the devastating landslide.

I am deeply honoured to bring a message of solidarity and togetherness from the Group of Least Developed Countries to the fellow SIDS MemberStates.

Let me begin by expressing our sincere and deepest gratitude to the Government and people of Antigua and Barbuda for a warm welcome and generous hospitality accorded to us since our arrival in this beautiful island country.

I commend the Co-Chairs, the Maldives, and New Zealand for their able leadership of the SIDS4 Conference preparatory process and for making this Conference a success.

I would also like to appreciate the Secretary General of the Conference and Special Advisor for the Conference, High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS, for their diligent efforts and unwavering support.

Vulnerabilities define the countries in special situations.

LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS are among the countries hardest hit by the impacts of compounding and intersecting crises from the pandemic to climate change, conflicts to geopolitical competition and rivalry, and ever-rising cost of living due to external shocks.

The context of SIDS is unique due to their structural vulnerability emanating from the geographical situation, lack of alternative energy sources, and burgeoning impacts of elevated frequency and intensity of climate disasters impacting them the most.

Despite the unprecedented advancements we have made in technology, innovation, and skills, countries in special situations have not received enough attention to address the vulnerabilities they face.

To our utter consternation, vulnerabilities, risks, and challenges facing SIDS are ever worsening.

SIDS are in need of stronger and enhanced global support to address the challenges they are facing.

We must help strengthen the sustainability and resilience of SIDS.

We must support SIDS to build back better from persistent shocks.

We must ensure urgent global action to the rise of sea level caused by the melting of snow in the polar regions including mountains all over the world.

SIDS deserve stronger attention and should not be left behind. We the LDCs wholeheartedly support the cause of SIDS and also underline the fact that there is an organic link between sea-level rise and melting of glaciers.

As we prepare for the Summit of the Future and the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, it is imperative that the needs and priorities of SIDS be reflected and addressed properly.

It is only through stronger global solidarity, harmony, cooperation, and collaboration that we can address the global-level systemic problems. We must stop carbon emissions first, the main cause of the sea-level rise and melting of glaciers before it is too late for the existence of human beings.

We, the countries in special situations, are paying a very high cost of climate change despite our negligible contribution to it.

The successful adoption of the Fourth Program of Action the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS) is yet another opportunity for not only SIDS but also for the entire global community to help address multidimensional vulnerabilities and challenges facing these fellow countries.

On this, I take this opportunity to extend our sincere congratulations to SIDS on the adoption of this ambitious yet achievable outcome document.

I also reiterate the commitment expressed by the LDCs at the inception of this process to engage constructively in pursuit of a successful implementation of the new 10-year mandate for the SIDS.

ABAS makes a good diagnosis of the problems SIDS face. It is an action-oriented document. It is a transformative agenda for SIDS for the coming decade.

cade.

In light of this successful Conference, we must not forget that effective implementation is of paramount importance to translating this ambitious document into action. Only actions, not lofty plans will serve the interests of SIDS as well as of the entire global community.

As our stakes are common in terms of sustainable economic development and threats of the climate crisis, we LDCs and SIDS must work together with a sense of strong partnership to make this world more sustainable, equitable, inclusive, and just.

In this critical juncture, we LDCs would like to join our voice with fellow SIDS members to call upon development partners, multilateral stakeholders, the UN development system, and the entire global community to stand with SIDS with a robust and enhanced level of support to bring ABAS into action.

I once again, express our strong solidarity with SIDS and wish the Conference a grand success!!!

Sewa Lamsal is the Foreign Secretary of Nepal, Excerpts of her statement delivered as a leader of the Nepali Delegation to the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4) on Behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries (LDCs).



ARTICLE

NHRC's 24th Birthday: We Would Like To Commend The Commission's Continuous Vigilance, Adaptability, And Dedication



BY: HANAA SINGER-HAMDY

On behalf of the United Nations in Nepal, I would like to offer sincere badhaai to the National Human Rights Commission of Nepal on your 24th Anniversary. Badhaai also for retaining your “A” status and surpassing the scrutiny of the Special Review! The UN Country Team is honored to be partnering with an institution that meets international standards!

Nepal is such a beautiful country! Its diversity is its beauty, as exemplified in the national anthem we heard earlier referring to the country as a garland made up of sayaun thungga phool. Nepal's diversity is also a challenge. Nurturing social cohesion amongst such diversity requires the Commission, the Government, and the Constitutional Commissions to work hand in hand, to ensure freedom, equality, and equity of ALL its people. Leave No One Behind means prioritizing the furthest behind first like the Dalits, Madhesi, Tharus, Indigenous Peoples, Muslims, women and girls, sexual and gender minorities, as well as persons with disabilities.

Nepal is still in the early stages of Federalism. While on a recent trip to the Karnali and Madhesh Pradesh, it was so heartening to hear positive narratives from citizens, and local and provincial governments on how federalism has brought the government closer to citizens.

However, much work remains for these citizens to fully experience federalism. Federal structures and institutions need more strengthening to bring services closer to the citizens. The exercise of autonomy and authority guaranteed by the Constitution is a must.

A lot also still needs to be done to root out deeply entrenched and pervasive harmful practices such as caste-based discrimination, untouchability, gender-based violence, and domestic violence, which hold people back from reaching their full potential. It is by undertaking steps to reduce inequalities in society, and reinforce the rule of law, that the envisaged structural transformation is achieved.

Last year at the 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, member states, including Nepal, vowed to uphold and promote human rights standards, principles, and values. These commitments are reflected in the recommendations from various UN Human Rights Mechanisms like the Universal Periodic Review; the treaty bodies, Resolutions 1325, and 1820, as well as Guiding Principles like Business and Human Rights. We hope, Nepal's National Action Plan based on these international norms, standards, and guidance is adequately funded and will thereby translate into reality, into tangible results.

I urge the Government as well as NHRC Nepal to highlight the progress being made in the country at international forums. This requires timely submission of periodic reports as obligated in various treaties for instance.

We should not let the momentum of transitional justice lose steam at any cost. Eighteen years after the armed conflict, uncertainty still looms amongst victims regarding the truth of the incidents and the whereabouts of their loved ones. The wounds, the pain, and the tears still plague the victims.

Echoing the Secretary General's messaging, I would like the encourage your Government and the Parliament to “leave no stone unturned” to ensure that all victims have access to truth,

reparation, and justice that they have been seeking for decades that would eventually foster reconciliation and ensure non-reoccurrence of violations.

I also urge the Government to expedite the implementation of the recommendations made by the NHRC Nepal.

Today, on NHRC's 24th birthday, we would like to commend the Commission's continuous vigilance, adaptability, and dedication to the protection and promotion of evolving human rights issues, including

in areas like climate change, misinformation, disinformation, and false information.

For NHRC to evolve, be relatable, and grow to keep pace with ever-changing scenarios, it needs an investment of resources, capacity, autonomy, and independence. Furthermore, the proposed new NHRC Act also needs to be adopted, in compliance with the Paris Principles.

One year short of your silver jubilee, at a time when globally we are grappling with numerous human rights challenges, it is even more important for all of us to rekindle the hope of protection of human rights and advance promises of freedom of speech, expression, opinion, equality before the law, and justice for everyone, everywhere, always.

The United Nations in Nepal remains committed to supporting the Commission and the Government in your endeavors to promote and protect human rights.

Hanaa Singer Hamdy is the UN Resident Coordinator to Nepal. Excerpts of her statement delivered at 24th Anniversary of the National Human Rights Commission of Nepal



The Murderous Events Of 7th October Will Be Remembered For Ever By Every Israeli

We will continue to make any effort and bring them safe home. These efforts include the release of bipin Joshy, a nepali student that is held until today by the terrorists of Hamas



BY: HANAN GODER-GOLDBERGER

It is a great honor to be here to mark the 76th Independence Day of the state of Israel. This is our National Day, and this term, “National Day”, opens the door for something that we believe was granted to us long ago: What is our national identity and why after so many years we still discuss it.

Independence and sovereignty are dear to any nation. In our case it took us 2000 years to obtain it again. Israel is proud of what we have achieved during the period of 76 years.

The murderous events of 7th October will be remembered for ever by every Israeli. Some of the photos from that day are exhibited here. I know, they are shocking. I will add that the release of the remaining 125 hostages that are held until now by Hamas is one of our major goals. We will continue to make any effort and bring them safe home. These efforts include the release of bipin Joshy, a nepali student that is held until today by the terrorists of Hamas. And at the same time: let me emphasize that Israel will continue to search for peace that will bring tolerance and common life in our region.

Nepal and Israel have established diplomatic relations in 1960. This courageous step was taken by the Nepali government when taking such action was not popular, especially in this part of the world.

This courageous step will never be forgotten! I know that when Israelis and Nepalis meet we are impressed by the friendship, sympathy and popularity that immediately emerge.

Why is that so? We are both small nations in a fast changing world and we both try to maintain our identity. We are small but we are proud, of our languages, our culture, our nature, our landscape and many other elements that build our identity. This is the reason that, in spite of the long geographic distance we have such strong bridges between our two nations, governments and people.



Your Right Honorable, I know that together we are going to further strengthen in the future.

Let us use this year and have a long distance friendly hand shake from the two extremes on our planet: From the highest point to the lowest point, from 8 kilometers high Mount Sagarmata down to below ocean level of the Dead Sea – Mrita Sagar.

Hanan Goder is the ambassador of Israel to Nepal. Excerpts of his statement delivered at Israel's 76th Independence Day.

BEEN

At National Level

At the national level, the Building Energy Efficiency in Nepal (BEEN) initiative, which was launched two years ago with funding from the European Union's Switch Asia Program, has played a crucial role in promoting the establishment of energy-efficient buildings.

By A CORRESPONDENT

These efforts have been further supported by the recent budget announcement for 2024-2025 by Finance Minister Barsha Man Pun. For the first time, the budget recognizes the importance of constructing energy-efficient and climate-resilient buildings.

During his budget speech on May 25, Minister Pun emphasized the need to improve climate adaptation and energy efficiency in the construction of buildings at the federal,

provincial and local levels.

The implementation of BEEN, a four-year project, has been led by the University of Innsbruck, Austria (UIBK), in collaboration with the Asociación Española de Normalización (UNE), Greentech Knowledge Solutions Pvt Ltd, and MinErgy Pvt Ltd. The project covers 60 Municipalities in Bagmati, Lumbini and Gandaki provinces, representing the four bio-climatic zones of Nepal.

Over the past two years, BEEN has successfully advocated for the implementation of energy efficient building practices as a long-term solution for climate adaptation at the local level. Despite the recent increase in extreme temperatures, many people have been quick to install air conditioners, not realizing that this is not a sustainable approach to climate change. However, Finance Minister Pun's announcement has the potential to change this trend.

Currently, 20 of the 60 local governments are in the final stages of amending their local bylaws to make energy efficiency a mandatory requirement for new construction. The Finance Minister's announcement is significant.

The fact that Finance Minister Pun made this announcement is a testament to the growing relevance and importance of BEEN's approach at all levels of government.

Through close collaboration with various stakeholders, BEEN has actively promoted climate-responsive building design and retrofits, as well as the use of energy-efficient space heating and cooling technologies, resource-efficient building materials, and the integration of renewable energy sources.

BEEN has made significant progress in promoting low-carbon and resource-efficient building practices in Nepal's construction industry.

By supporting the development, construction, and renovation of green buildings, BEEN has successfully influenced national policy in a relatively short period of time.

Despite its brevity, the announcement will have a far-reaching impact on construction practices at all levels. Suyesh Prajapati, team lead-



er of the BEEN project, highlighted the groundbreaking inclusion of energy-efficient building requirements in the Nepalese government's annual budget. The Finance Minister's explicit policy directive for energy efficient buildings at the federal, provincial, and local government levels marks a pivotal moment in addressing these critical issues.

BEEN's efforts have been instrumental in promoting the adoption of sustainable building practices in Nepal's construction sector. By supporting the design, construction, and renovation of climate-friendly

buildings, BEEN has successfully influenced national policy in a relatively short period of time.

Prajapati noted that BEEN has been successful in taking its energy efficiency agenda from the local to the national level. Of the 60 local governments, 50 have already initiated the process of adopting by-laws that include the energy efficiency agenda.

To strengthen the technical capacity of these local governments, BEEN has conducted training sessions for more than 200 technical staff from these municipalities.



This training aims to facilitate the implementation of the energy efficiency agenda in building construction. As a result of these efforts, 120 energy efficient buildings have already been constructed in these areas with the support of BEEN. Similarly, BEEN has provided training to more than 200 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) from different sectors such as designers and brick manufacturers. These businesses have the capacity to provide energy



efficient services and products.

“We will work with 4 associations and build the capacity of 8 categories of MSMEs including: architects, engineers, contractors, renewable energy service providers, door-window service providers, insulation service providers, heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) service providers, renewable energy service providers, and building material manufacturers, especially hollow brick manufacturers,” said Prajapati.

Even before the adoption of the national agenda, NABIL Bank has already formulated a housing loan package for green building. In addition, the bank has announced its commitment to provide concessional loans at lower interest rates for the construction of green houses.

“In this context, the inclusion of the energy efficiency agenda at the national level is of immense importance,” emphasized Prajapati.

The research findings indicate that the inappropriate design of buildings has led to a significant increase in energy usage, with approximately 60 percent of energy being consumed for heating and cooling purposes in modern buildings in Kathmandu.



Prajapati said, “When discussing climate change and rising temperatures, it is crucial to consider the thermal environment in our homes. Our goal is not only to reduce electricity bills, but also to ensure thermal comfort”.

Energy-efficient buildings play a crucial role in grid stabilization. Studies conducted in Europe have shown that the energy consumption of buildings is a major cause of blackouts. This is particularly problematic during peak load periods.

The construction of concrete houses in the Terai, Hill and Himalayan regions has been done without proper guidelines and policies at the national level. This has resulted in the same type of houses being built in areas with extreme hot and cold climates. The result is increased energy consumption to heat houses in some areas and keep them cool in others.

Experts emphasize the importance of taking local weather conditions into account when constructing buildings and designing air conditioning systems accordingly.

With the continued rapid urbanization and construction of new buildings, there is a growing need for



policies that promote the economical and efficient use of energy in these structures.

Nepal has taken a different approach to building codes than neighboring countries such as India, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan. Recently, local municipalities have begun to develop and enforce energy-efficient building codes as part of the building permit process.

Although still in its early stages, standards have been established to ensure that buildings are constructed in accordance with climate adaptation and energy efficiency requirements. Pokhara Metropolitan Municipality and Dhulikhel Municipality both adopted these standards for the first time during the municipal assembly meetings. Pokhara has set a precedent by being the first local level to enforce such standards, which also take into account land use, public health, and

other essential facilities.

To meet its commitment to achieve zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045, the government has pledged to implement the National Building Code at all local levels. This initiative aims to reduce coal consumption and air pollution in the brick and cement industries. In addition, the government will revise the Urban Environmental Management Guidelines by 2025 to promote low-carbon and climate-adapted urban settlements.

Prajapati stresses the importance of these measures. He emphasizes that by implementing these initiatives, Nepal can make a significant contribution to reducing its carbon footprint. Statistics from the last census show that more than 1.2 million new houses have been built in the country over the past decade.

Most houses are built in urban ar-

reas due to increasing urbanization. The use of energy-intensive building materials, including bricks, contributes to the high carbon footprint of the building sector.

The construction of energy efficient buildings in metropolitan cities, sub-metropolitan cities and communities can have positive economic, social and environmental impacts.

Research conducted by BEEN has shown that changing government behavior and policies is not only about the cost and scale of change, but also about the relevance of the agenda and context. Funded by the European Union through the Switch Asia Project, BEEN is one of the few projects with the capacity to influence both national and local levels of provinces.



SAMRIDDHI: IFAD AND MoICS

Transformation of Subsistence Agriculture Through Women

Supported by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and executed by the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supply (MoICS), the Rural Enterprises and Remittances Project (RERP) SAMRIDDHI has organized Vocational Skill Training (VST) that integrates market chains and modern technology. This initiative has empowered numerous young women from 16 districts in the Koshi, Madhesh, and Bagmati Provinces to shift from subsistence farming to commercial agriculture, thereby boosting rural prosperity. In Bhojpur and Bara Districts, where unique climatic and cultural characteristics prevail, two women have exemplified how commercializing agriculture can help combat poverty. Despite the diversity in climate and culture, the Samriddhi project has proven that VST is a unifying factor in the transition from subsistence farming to a profitable enterprise, ultimately increasing women's income.

BY KESHAB POUDEL

Rita Devi Subedi, 41, lives in Paiyapani, Bhojpur Municipality ward 12, Koshi Province. On the contrary, Minita Kumari Yadav, aged 32, resides in Dharmapur, Subarna Rural Municipality Ward 6, Bara

District, Madhesh Province. These two individuals inhabit different ecological zones and encounter diverse environments. Nevertheless, despite their geographical and socio-cultural distinctions, they share a common

occupation.

Both Subedi and Yadav have shifted from substance-based farming to commercial farming to enhance their annual income and elevate themselves from poverty. This transition was facilitated by the Samriddhi Proj-

ect, which they engaged in following the completion of the VST graduation course.

Subedi, a single mother with one child, lives in the secluded hilly region of Bhojpur, while Yadav, the wife of a migrant worker, resides in the remote southern area of Bara District, merely one kilometer away from the Indian border. Despite the differences in their ecological settings, these two individuals exhibit similarities in their lifestyles. Like Khadka and Yadav, numerous other women have demonstrated that advancements in agriculture create job opportunities and income for rural communities through farming, processing, and marketing endeavors.

Samriddhi's learning involves the understanding that by strengthening market linkages, developing value chains, and promoting new technology, the capacity of women to support poverty alle-



viation is enhanced, as stated by Sanjeev Kumar Shrestha, an expert in Value Chain & Markets and a National Consultant at the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

Shrestha also emphasized that vocational skills, which complement agriculture by providing training in modern farming

techniques, agri-processing, and entrepreneurship, play a crucial role in increasing productivity, fostering innovation, and generating income within the agricultural sector.

Khadka and Yadav's experiences further demonstrate that integrating vocational skills with agriculture, market chain, and finance can lead to sustainable rural development in Nepal and create additional opportunities for local communities.

Yadav's Experience

During the wheat harvesting season, Yadav takes on a dual role. As wheat is a staple crop, she must divide her time between harvesting wheat and tending to off-season vegetables grown in tunnels and on her small plot of land. With an annual income of approximately Rs. 250,000.00 (US\$ 1800), Yadav ef-





ficiently manages both responsibilities while being a mother to three daughters and a son.

After attending VST training last year with a group of 20 women, Yadav has acquired skills and knowledge that allow her to use machinery for wheat harvesting, saving time and energy. This training has also connected her to the market chain, where vendors collect the vegetables grown by Yadav and her group in the field.

Yadav stated, “We no longer have to worry about the market or vegetable supply. The vendors visit us regularly to collect our produce and send it to the district headquarters in Kalaiya.” Subedi, who previously faced challenges in selling her products, is now also linked to market vendors who collect vegetables from her garden and pay in cash.

By cultivating off-season vegetables on her entire 25-ropani land annually, as well as raising goats, chickens, cows, and buffaloes, Subedi can earn around Rs. 600,000.00 annually. This income is sufficient to cover food expenses, tuition fees for

her son’s college education, and medical costs for her father.

Subedi reported that her production almost doubled following the implementation of changes in the plantation pattern, including maintaining gaps and managing water. By applying fundamental plantation skills, production can be enhanced by nearly double. Subedi, a member of Taja Tarkari Nursery Krishak Samuha, a farmer group with 25 members, now owns two tunnels and a hand tractor for land cultivation.

This has resolved any worries

about the market for their goods. Previously, they had to travel to the district headquarters to sell their vegetables and often came back with unsold items. However, now vendors collect their products and distribute them to Kathmandu, Dharan, and Dhan-kuta. Yadav, who took part in the training, has also observed an almost double increase in annual vegetable production.

They no longer have to be concerned about the market, as they previously encountered difficulties and had to discard vegetables due to the absence of a market. In the past, farmers in Bhojpur Municipality and Dharmapur Tole of Subarna Rural Municipality faced similar issues, such as the lack of collection centers and dependence on individual traders for pricing.

As a result of being excluded from the market chain, women were left with no option but to accept whatever prices were offered to them. Subedi emphasized that most of them had to transport their produce to Bhojpur Bazar themselves and were compelled to sell at the given



price.

Otherwise, they had to bring it back. Nirmala Devi Yadav, a member of the women's group in Dharmapur ward 6 of Subarna Rural Municipality, highlighted that the market chain, along with VST graduation, has provided them with new opportunities.

She explained that in the past, their production was limited and they lacked knowledge and skills regarding modern off-season high-value vegetables and the market to sell their products. Traders used to visit their villages only when they could sell the vegetables at a high price in the market, but they would purchase from them at a significantly lower price, much below the market value. However, the situation has now changed. With access to the market chain, vendors pay the prices they demand.

They no longer have to individually negotiate or personally



take their products to the market, where pricing depends on bargaining or their need for money. Currently, they are discussing and planning to establish a nearby collection center for their vegetables.

VST Training

VST has played a crucial role in boosting production in Bhojpur and Bara. Previously, the majority of farmers in these regions could only sell a small portion

of their crops and vegetables due to a lack of knowledge and technical skills. However, a study by the Samriddhi Project found that less than two percent of farmers were able to grow off-season products, and the prices of their goods were uncertain.

The introduction of vocational skills has enabled small landholding farmers to participate in commercial production. They have realized that adopting simple techniques can significantly increase their output.



Subedi and Yadav highlighted that their previous lack of skills in selecting suitable climate, location, and vegetable species, as well as their limited knowledge of technologies like disease and insect control, irrigation, fertilizer use, and timing of seed sowing and seedling planting, had hampered their production. Now, they can maximize their time and yield more on smaller plots of land.

Saroj Prasad Guragain, the Project Manager of Samriddhi,



emphasized the importance of modernizing the agricultural sector by providing farmers with skills and linking them to market chains through local government initiatives, especially since over 70 percent of the population still depends on agriculture. The Samriddhi project has successfully reached over 60,000 farmers, offering them market connections and valuable skills to enhance their livelihoods.

Subedi's Success

Subedi, a native of Bhojpur, and Yadav, from Bara, have both successfully completed vocational training in offseason vegetable farming. They are part of a select group of individuals who are enthusiastic about imparting their newfound knowledge to their fellow farmers and the broader community. Moreover, there are

many others who are also eager to share their own experiences.

Kailash Kumar Ale, the Mayor of Bhojpur Municipality, has expressed his contentment with the achievements made during his initial term. He has recognized the valuable partnership with the Samriddhi team, which has significantly contributed to the municipality's development. Presently, endeavors are underway to establish Bhojpur as a hub for off-season vegetable cultivation and self-sufficiency in dairy products. The mayor has also emphasized the positive outcomes of result-oriented investments within the project and has conveyed the municipality's intention to replicate this strategy in future initiatives.

Subedi and Yadav firmly believe that through sharing their

insights and expertise, they can improve farming techniques and facilitate the exchange of valuable knowledge. Even farmers outside their group have begun visiting their farms to learn from their experiences, indicating a growing interest in adopting these innovative methods. The trainees are thrilled to share their knowledge and actively contribute to the agricultural pursuits of the local community.

Dr. Prabin Manandhar, the country director of Helvetas-Nepal, has expressed his contentment with the positive impact of the organization's endeavors in enhancing the livelihoods of farmers. Throughout the previous two years, the project team has diligently worked towards achieving their objectives, particularly in the realm of generating decent employment opportunities.

This aspect of the Samriddhi project has significantly contributed to the overarching goals. The project, which is supported by the IFAD in partnership with the Government of Nepal Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies, has highlighted the significance of vocational skills in rural agriculture. Specifically, it has played a crucial role in uplifting the living standards of impoverished and marginalized communities.

By providing vocational training, farmers such as Subedi and Yadav have gained valuable insights into modern farming techniques, agri-processing, and entrepreneurship, leading to enhanced productivity and income. The advancements achieved in the past two years can be credited to the collective efforts of the entire team and collaborations with local authorities, including



the Municipality and Rural Municipalities of Koshi, Madhesh, and Bagmati Provinces.

The technical manpower gap has been successfully bridged by the Samriddhi Project, empowering farmers to tackle challenges and contribute to sectoral development. Sandip Poudel, the Team Leader of Helvetas-Nepal, highlighted that in addition to imparting necessary skills, Samriddhi has also established robust

marketing channels and collective bargaining platforms.

These initiatives ensure fair prices for farmers, reduce reliance on middlemen, and promote transparency and efficiency in agricultural trade.

Embracing vocational skills has proven to be instrumental in fostering a thriving subsistence-based agricultural sector, leading to prosperity for farmers and sustainable rural development in Nepal.

As the project nears the end of its current phase, Samriddhi is actively addressing wage labor obstacles and widespread migration from rural to urban areas and overseas. Operating in 16 districts across Koshi, Madhesh, and Bagmati Province, IFAD and the MICS have positively impacted over 200,000 beneficiaries through financial education programs reaching around 300,000 individuals.



तातो हावा 'लु' बाट जोगिने उपाय

- सकेसम्म दिउँसो घरबाट बाहिर ननिस्कने,
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- धेरै पसिना आएमा जीवनजल पिउने,
- चिसो पानीले नुहाउने,
- कामकाज सकभर बिहान वा बेलुका गर्ने,
- मदिरा सेवन नगर्ने,
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