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**OPINION**  
Dipak Gyawali



**VIEWPOINT**  
Park Tae-Young



**FORUM**  
Virginie Corteval

NEW  
**SPOTLIGHT**  
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October 04, 2024  
FORTNIGHTLY



**DASHAIN FESTIVAL**  
**Festival of Unity**

**INSIDE**



**NEPAL-CANADA**  
Bilateral Meeting



**JAPANESE ENVOY KIKUTA YUTAKA**  
Charismatic Diplomat



**RAHUGHAT HYDROPOWER PROJECT**  
Nepal-India Hydropower Collaboration

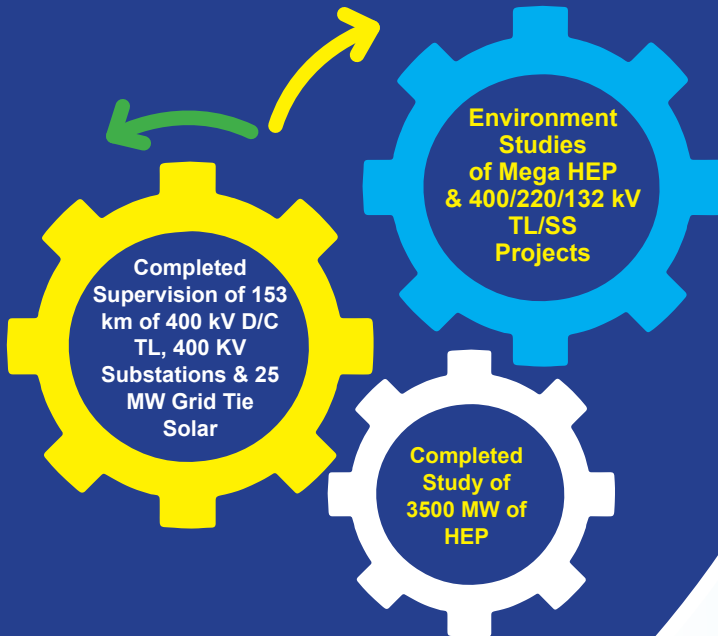


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• Jagadulla A HEP



• Grid Tie Solar Devighat (25 MW)



• Heli-LiDAR Survey- Kathmandu Valley 220 kV TL Project



• Dhalkebar-Inaruwa 400 kV TL (Completed)



• Bheri Babai Diversion Multipurpose Project



• Sunkoshi-Marine Diversion Multipurpose Project

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**Notes From The Editor**



Although a decade has passed since the adoption of the new federal constitution, which was anticipated to usher in political stability and economic advancement, Nepal continues to grapple with instability. Over the past ten years, the nation has experienced the formation of seven different governments. This frequent governmental turnover has significantly hindered the country's economic development. Throughout this period, Nepal has witnessed various governmental structures, including a two-thirds majority government and multiple coalition governments following the second general election. The recent decision by the government to take action against individuals indicted by the Parliamentary Inquiry Commission, including a leader from the Rastriya Swatantra Party, is poised to incite political discord. Rather than focusing on the unpredictable nature of politics, we have chosen to highlight the Dashain festival and its importance within Nepali society as our feature story. Additionally, we have addressed other pressing issues of the day. As the people of Nepal celebrate their most significant festival, the New Spotlight Family extends warm wishes for a Happy Dashain 2081 to all its readers, supporters, and well-wishers. It is our sincere wish that this festival contributes to the prosperity and political stability of the country.

**Keshab Poudel**

Editor

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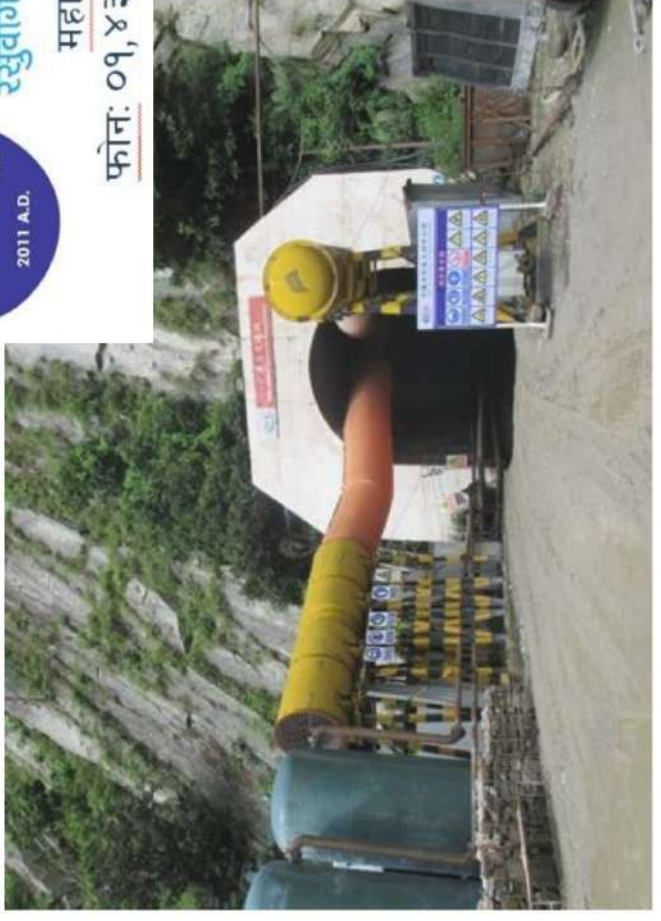


**RASUWAGADHI**  
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फोन: ०१, ४३७१७४४, ४३७१७९४



## NEWSNOTES

### VP Yadav Visited Salak Dairy Farm In Sundarijal

Vice President Ram Sahaya Yadav visited Salaka Dairy Farm in Sundarijal.

Run by Ang Phurba Sherpa, a Shalom Club member, the farm has 160 cows and produced 20 liters of milk per cow per day.



“We salute Ang Phurba Sherpa for running a modern dairy farm and increasing productivity of the rural sector of in Nepal,”

writes Ambassador of Israel to Nepal Hanan Godder.

Ambassador Godder believes in slogan Agriculture is not a hobby, Agriculture is a business. Agriculture is a profession. Agriculture is a way of life.

### Nepalese Women Have Made Many Achievements Since Promulgation Of New Constitution: Foreign Minister Dr. Rana

Foreign Minister Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba underlined the achievements made by Nepali women since the promulgation of the Constitution of Nepal in 2015. She highlighted the success of Nepali women to reach to the top positions as the head of state, chief justice and the speaker of the parliament in a matter of few years.

She also added that the participation of women in public life, such as civil service, security forces and public sector employment opportunities has also increased significantly. Foreign Minister Dr. Rana stressed the need of the ‘whole of’ approach to attain gender equality, to protect and uphold a girl from her womb to her tomb with the support of untiring leadership and fearless efforts.

She also highlighted the statistical evidence from around the world demonstrating persistent challenges faced by women to reach to the leadership position and attain general and sustained empowerment. She underlined the need to build a strong coalition at local, national as well as global level and move forward to ensure women’s dignified position in the world.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. Rana participated in the Women Foreign Ministers’ Meeting hosted by Mélanie Joly, Foreign Minister of Canada and the Kamina Johnson Smith, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica in Toronto on 19-20 September 2024.

The meeting was held in two sessions: Women in Public Spaces: Politics, Leadership and Governance; and Women Leaders in the Age of Disinformation.

During the second session, Foreign Minister Dr. Deuba em-

phasized the importance of digital technology and tools for women leaders to directly reach out to their constituencies, to raise awareness and spread positive message towards women leadership.

She also highlighted the flip side of the digital technology widely used to spread hate, targeted harassment, and disinformation to discourage women from rising in public offices and business. She said that the leadership in developed countries could play an important role to secure technological and financial support to developing countries to bridge the divide, as well as to rein-in the negative by-products of digital technologies for the betterment of society.

The Women Foreign Ministers’ Meeting concluded with a Co-Chairs’ Statement that acknowledges the doubling of women’s political representation across the world in past 25 years and reaffirms commitment to break down barriers and empower the next generation of women leaders.

The Statement pledges to advance women’s participation in leadership and decision-making and support safe and inclusive spaces for women in politics and public life. The Meeting also pledges to intentionally encourage young women across the world to enter politics and public life.

The statement expresses concerns with the growing hate and misogynistic discourse found online targeting women, particularly in civic spaces and agreed to address online gender-based violence and prevent gendered disinformation and call on online platforms to take action and increase their accountability.



During the Meeting, Foreign Minister Dr. Deuba was accompanied by Ambassador of Nepal to Canada, Bharat Raj Paudyal and other members of her delegation.

On the sidelines of the Women Foreign Ministers’ Meeting, Foreign Minister Dr. Rana had a bilateral meeting with the Foreign Minister of Romania Luminița-Teodora Odobescu.

The two Foreign Ministers exchanged views on further strengthening and expanding mutually beneficial relations between the two countries. They also discussed about the ways to expedite establishing diplomatic representation in each others country and promoting welfare and interests of Nepali migrant workers in Romania.

Later today, Foreign Minister Dr. Rana received a delegation of Nepali entrepreneurs based in Toronto and discussed the issues related to promoting export of Nepali agricultural and cottage industry produces to Canada as well as other matters of interests to the Nepali diaspora community and



students.

Separately, Foreign Minister also received insights from the community leader and NRNA representatives on the challenges of Nepali young students that jump immediately after completion of + two education in Nepal to study abroad without adequate preparation and sufficient understanding of the courses, prospects and employability.

**Dr. Brsha KC Is The First Nepali Women Army Officer To Complete A Short Course At Royal Military Academy Sandhurst**

Lieutenant (Technical) Dr. Barsha KC is the first



woman technical officer from the Nepali Army to complete a short course at Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, a world's leading military academy.

“Dr. KC said the training helped strengthen her

leadership/decision-making skills & maintain composure in challenging situations. We wish her all the best,” writes British Embassy in its X wall.

**Nepal-US Joint Military Exercise Concluded**

The joint exercise PACIFIC ANGEL conducted between the Nepali Army and the Army of United States of America has concluded.

During the joint exercise both the army shared knowledge on on disaster management, United Nations peacekeeping missions, counter-terrorism, etc.

The join exercise started from September 15 concluded today. The Nepali



Army has been participating in bilateral and multilateral exercises and various types of professional competitions with the armies of different countries with the aim of enhancing capacity in disaster management, humanitarian

assistance, United Nations peacekeeping missions, etc.

**Nepali Embassy In Tokyo Hosted A Reception On Ne-**

**pal’s National Day**

Embassy of Nepal in Tokyo hosted a Special Ceremony on the occasion of the National Day of Nepal in Tokyo.

Sharat Singh Bhandari, Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security of the Government of Nepal attended the program as the Chief Guest.



Parliamentary-Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Member of the National Diet, Ambassadors and the heads of diplomatic missions, high-ranking officials of the Government of Japan, Mayors of various cities of Japan, representatives from the Japanese business community and the Nepali community were present in the ceremony.

In his welcome remarks, Ambassador of Nepal to Japan Dr. Durga Bahadur Subedi extended respectful greetings to Their Imperial Majesties, Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako and to the friendly Government and people of Japan.

He also extended best wishes to the Nepali community residing in Japan and expressed his belief that the National Day would inspire all Nepali people to work unitedly for socioeconomic development and prosperity of Nepal.

Dr. Subedi highlighted the longstanding friendly relations between Nepal and Japan, and stated that the Nepal-Japan bilateral relationship was characterized by friendship, goodwill, cooperation, mutual understanding and respect for each other’s national interests and aspirations. Mentioning that Japan is regarded as a trusted development partner and reliable friend of Nepal, Ambassador Dr. Subedi further stated that trade, tourism, education, labour and culture remained the key dimension of Nepal-Japan relations.

**KOICA Opens Door For Mugu People To Get Easy Health Access At Nepal Korea Friendship Municipality Hospital**

Nepal Korea Friendship Municipality Hospital and Mugu Hospital have signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on 13 September, at the witness of KOICA Nepal and Madhyapur Thimi Municipality.

The MOU mainly aims to enhance healthcare access and improve patient referral services. Both the Hospitals are established under the grant support from KOICA.

The MOU was signed by Dr. Dipendra Kumar Raushan, Director of NKFMH and Dr. Nirmla Nagarkoti, Health Service Manager, Mugu Hospital in presence of Mooheon

## NEWSNOTES

Kong, Country Director of KOICA and Surendra Shrestha, Mayor, Madhyapur Thimi Municipality. The agreement establishes a structured patient referral system, ensuring that patients of Mugu Hospital will have streamlined access to specialized medical care available at NKFMH.



This initiative is expected to greatly improve healthcare delivery for patients who require advanced treatment not available in their local facilities. The agreement outlines a clear process for

referring patients from Mugu Hospital to NKFMH, ensuring timely and efficient transfers for advanced care.

Both hospitals will establish robust communication channels to facilitate coordination between medical staff and streamline patient management. The MOU includes provisions for joint training programs and workshops to enhance the skills of healthcare professionals from both institutions.

During the event, Kong, Country Director, KOICA expressed that the partnership between NKFMH and Mugu Hospital will set an example for future collaborations in the healthcare sector, demonstrating the positive impact of strategic alliances in enhancing patient care. He further added that this MOU is guided by the 5 Ps values of KOICA i.e. People, Peace, Prosperity, Planet and Partnership.

In the program, Surendra Shrestha, Mayor of Madhyapur Thimi Municipality expressed his enthusiasm about the new partnership stating “the MOU represents a significant step forward in our shared mission to provide high-quality medical care to communities in need.” Dr. Raushan, Director of NKFMH, stated that he is looking forward to working closely with our partners to ensure that patients receive the best possible care.

Dr Nagarkoti, Health Service Manager of Mugu Hospital stated that this MOU will be a mile stone in guiding the innocent and poor people of Mugu to access quality health care at very minimum cost and in some case without any cost.

He further added “By working together with NKFMH, we are taking a major step towards bridging the gap in healthcare services for our patients. We are grateful for the support from KOICA and Madhyapur Thimi Municipality in making this possible.”

### **Nepalese Army Team Leaves For China For Joint Exercise**

The Nepali Army team has left for China to participate in the ongoing exercise Sagarmatha Friendship between the Nepali Army and the People’s Liberation Army of the People’s Liberation Army of China.

Accordingly, The exercise will be conducted in Chongqing, China from Ashwin 05th to Ashwin 15th (accordingly 21 Sep - 01 Oct 2024), knowledge will be shared on disaster management, United Nations peacekeeping missions, counter-terrorism, etc.

This is the fourth edition of the exercise that started in 2014. The exercise, which is being conducted alternately every year in Nepal and China, is about to be postponed for a few years after the epidemic of Covid-19.

The Nepali Army has been participating in bilateral and multilateral exercises and various types of professional competitions with the armies of different countries with the aim of enhancing capacity in disaster management, humanitarian assistance, United Nations peacekeeping missions, etc.

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### **Ambassador of India Pays A Courtesy Call On COAS General Sigdel**

Ambassador of India to Nepal Naveen Srivastava paid a courtesy call on Chief of Army Staff General Ashokraj Sigdel at Nepal Army Headqater.



During the meeting, the discussed mutual interests and bilateral relations between the two countries. The Nepali Army believes that this kind of meeting

will help to make the relationship between the two countries more harmonious and strong.

### **Promulgation Of Constitution of Nepal 2015 A Pivotal Moment: FM Dr. Rana**

Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba called the promulgation of the Constitution of Nepal in 2015 a pivotal moment in Nepal’s history that represented the culmination of decades of struggle and sacrifice of the Nepali people to write a democratic constitution by an inclusive and representative constituent assembly.

She said that the Constitution embodies the collective aspiration of multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-cultural nation to build a just, inclusive and democratic society. Foreign Minister Dr. Rana further stated that the empowering effect of the Constitution can now be seen in greater participation and representation of women and other section of Nepali society in the public life. She highlighted the 33



percent of the seats in the federal parliament and provincial assemblies and almost 41 percent of the seats in the local level are represented by women.

Addressing the Constitution Day and National Day program in Ottawa, foreign Minister Dr. Deuba also highlighted the background of Canada Nepal cooperation and invited to utilize the foundation already built for greater engagements to promote investment in Nepali hydro-energy sector between the two governments and business sector.



Member of Parliament of Canada and Chair of Canada-Nepal Parliamentary Friendship Group Sonia

Sidhu extended best wishes to Nepal and Nepali people on the occasion of the National Day.

The program began with playing of the national anthems of Nepal and

Chief Guest of the event, Parliamentary Secretary of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada Robert Oliphant conveyed the best wishes to the Government and people of Nepal on the National Day saying that the bonds of friendship and cooperation between the two countries will continue to flourish in the coming days.

He complimented Nepal for the progress made in democratic transition, peace, and women's empowerment and expressed his confidence that the two countries would continue to work together for enhancing cooperation in mutually beneficial areas of trade, tourism, and investment.

Delivering her remarks on the occasion, the Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal

### French Embassy Honors Nepal's First Paralympic Medalist Palesha Goverdhan

The French Embassy in Nepal hosted a special event at the French Residence on September 16, celebrating Palesha Goverdhan, Nepal's first Paralympic medalist. Goverdhan's achievement in the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, where she won a bronze medal in the women's 57kg category of Para Taekwondo, was a proud moment for Nepal and a significant milestone in the country's sporting history.

In the presence of member secretary of National Sports Council, sports representatives, business leaders etc., French Ambassador Virginie Corteval congratulated Goverdhan for her hard work and success. The Ambassador remarked, "Palesha, you are a beacon of hope and deter-

mination. Your journey reflects the audacity to dream and conquer challenges. You have revealed the immense talent of Nepali athletes to the world."

The event also served as an opportunity to introduce the Choose France/ Marque France initiative, which encourages collaboration in business, culture, education etc. between France and other countries, including Nepal.



In alignment with the values of the Choose France/ Marque France campaign, Goverdhan's achievement reflects the spirit of perseverance, cooperation, and excellence that both nations strive to promote.

As part of the Choose France initiative, the Embassy announced Choose France Tour, scheduled for 28 September 2024 at the Alliance Française, where Nepali students will have the chance to learn more about studying in France and meet the representatives from more than 15 prestigious French educational institutions.

### SAARC's Third Technical Meeting of Senior Official of Education Convened in Bangkok

The Third Technical Meeting of SAARC Senior Officials of Education was held on September 12, 2024, in Bangkok, Thailand, on the sidelines of the Asia Pacific Meeting on Education (APMED6). This important event marked eight years since the launch of the SAARC Framework for Action for Education 2030 and was organized by the SAARC Secretariat with technical and logistical support from the UNESCO Regional Office in New Delhi and the UNICEF Regional Office in Kathmandu.



The Meeting was attended by representatives from seven SAARC member states of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, alongside the Regional Director of UNESCO and the Representative of UNICEF. The session was chaired by Minister of State for

## NEWSNOTES

Higher Education Mr. Ahmed Shafeeu from the esteemed Government of Maldives, with Ms. IroshaCooray, Director at the SAARC Secretariat, formally opening the meeting in accordance with SAARC protocol.

The gathering served as a vital forum for reviewing and assessing the progress of the SAARC Framework for Action for Education 2030. The discussions highlighted both advancements and challenges within the region, establishing some recommendations for future actions aimed at improving educational outcomes across South Asia.

Key outcomes and recommendations from the meeting included a strategic focus on integrating climate change adaptation into the SAARC agenda and advocating for increased funding and resources to strengthen SAARC's role as a South-South Cooperation Platform. The meeting emphasized leveraging SAARC as a knowledge management forum to share best practices in teacher professional development, learning assessment, and SDG 4 data. Additionally, a regional program/framework was proposed to tackle the learning crisis by enhancing learning assessment capabilities. The meeting also highlighted the need to improve educational access for children, especially girls, and to promote STEM education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Other recommendations included assessing and improving teacher competencies and fostering public-private partnerships to advance education access and outcomes.

### Two Books By Sudhir Sharma Released

Two books by journalist and writer Sudhir Sharma have been released. The two books titled 'Monk Trade and Rebellion: Nepal's Vote-China Relations and India' and 'Himalpariko Huri: Changed Nepal-China Relations after the Republic' were released.

Sharma's two books were released during a program in Kathmandu. The book has written about Nepal's relationship with China and Tibet.

Speaking at the book release program, CPN (UML) General Secretary Shankar Pokharel said that Sharma's book presents the fact that Nepal has had relations with China since ancient times.



He said, "The popular belief that Nepal's foreign relations are dependent on India is not true.

It has been confirmed with facts that since ancient times there has been a relationship with the north in terms of cul-

ture, trade, tradition, religion, etc.

Pokharel also commented on Sharma's other book 'Himalpariko Huri: Changed Nepal-China Relations after the Republic'. He said that 'Huri' could not come to Nepal from the other side of the Himalayas. He said, "He named a book Himalpariko Huri. In our socio-cultural and other matters, the time has not come to accept that the wind has blown from the north. Is there a cold wind blowing?"

Expert on Nepal-China Affairs, Dr. Leela Nyaichai, General Secretary of Nepali Congress, Gagan Thapa, Vice President of Rashtriya Swatantra Party (RASWPA). Swarnim Wagle delivered a speech.

These two books by Sharma have been published by Kitab Publishers. "Monk Business and Rebellion: Nepal's Voice-China Relations and India" is priced at Rs 899. The price of "Huri of Himalpari: Changed Nepal-China relations after the Republic" remains at Rs 699.

### French Ambassador Virginie Corteval Presented Her Letter Of Credence To President Paudel

Ramchandra Paudel received Letters of Credence from Ms. Virginie Corteval, Resident Ambassador of the French Republic to Nepal on amidst a special ceremony held at the Office of the President, Sheetal Niwas.



Following the ceremony, newly appointed Ambassador Virginie Corteval, also met with

President Paudel and discussed the matter related to mutual interest and relations.

Corteval was born on July 31, 1963 and she is a career diplomat at the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs. Ms Corteval, has held various positions at the French Ministry for Europe and She has also held various positions abroad, in Manama, Edmonton, London, Dhaka, Amsterdam, Kuala Lumpur and Kathmandu (2012 – 2015).

She was Consul General in Calcutta (2018-2021) and deputy head of mission in Nicosia (2021-2024).

She speaks English and is decorated with a Knight of the Legion of Honour, and Knight of the National Order of Merit.

### I Am Eager To Experience The Natural Beauty And



## Culture Of Nepal: Australian Ambassador Leann Johnston

Leann Johnston the new Ambassador of Nepal to Australia, has said that she will work closely with the Nepalese government on local and international issues.



Johnston, who presented the certificate of status to President Ramchandra Paudel on Thursday (12 September), said that the relation-

ship between Australia and Nepal is strong. Ambassador said that it is a matter of pride to invest in Australia in Nepal.

She mentioned that she was excited to experience Nepal's natural beauty, high and diverse culture and warm hospitality. Leanne Johnston led the mission following the end of the previous Australian ambassador Felicity Volk's term.

"Our relationship is underpinned by a vibrant Nepalese community in Australia. Over 150,000 people of Nepalese heritage call Australia home."

Johnston is a career officer with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and was most recently Acting Australian High Commissioner in Abuja. She has previously served overseas in Fiji, France, Spain, Afghanistan, Kenya, Sweden, Germany, Türkiye and New Zealand.

She replaced outgoing Ambassador Felicity Volk for her contributions to advancing Australia's interests in Nepal since 2021.

In her message ambassador said that the year 2025 will mark the 65th anniversary of formal diplomatic relations between Australia and Nepal. Since the late 1980s, the friendship between our countries has flourished through formal links such as high-level visits, our Bilateral Consultation Mechanism, an active development assistance program and trade and investment ties. Equally important are our rapidly expanding people to people links.

"Around 180,000 Nepalis have made Australia their home and they are contributing to our countries' close relations, including through growing business connections," said ambassador.

In 2023, Nepal was Australia's second largest trading partner in South Asia, with total bilateral trade of \$4.6 billion, up by around 56 per cent from 2022. Nepal is now in the top 20 export markets for Australia.

Australia provided an estimated \$27.2 million in Official Development Assistance to Nepal in 2023-24, focused on

climate change and governance.

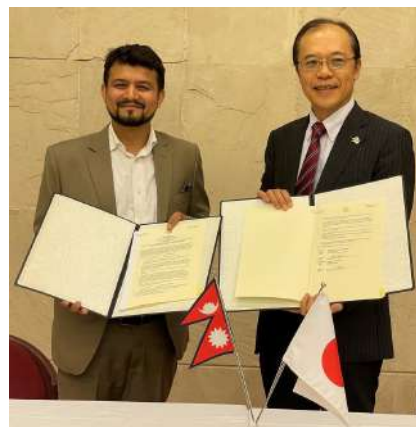
## Japan Provides Grant For Reconstruction Of Classrooms For Bheri Tribeni Secondary School In Jajarkot District

KIKUTA Yutaka, Ambassador of Japan to Nepal, signed a grant contract with Deepak Chapagain, President of Volunteer Corps Nepal (VCN), for the reconstruction of a classroom building for Shree Bheri Tribeni Secondary School (SBTSS) in Jajarkot district.

The signing ceremony was held at the Embassy of Japan in Kathmandu today. The project is funded under the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) of the Government of Japan and includes a grant of USD 170,159 (approximately NPR 22.7 million).

The project is managed by VCN, which has been active in emergency disaster relief and other sectors since 2018. The final beneficiary, SBTSS, was established in 1985 and serves as a core educational institution for nearly 500 students in Jajarkot and nearby districts.

However, the school is one of the institutions severely affected by the November 2023 earthquake, with its main building completely collapsed. As part of the community's recovery in the face of post-earthquake challenges, the project will support the reconstruction of a two-story building with 12 classrooms. It is expected that the classrooms built by GGP will provide a safe and effective educational environment for the students and teachers who are now forced to conduct their activities in the temporary school shelter.



The Embassy of Japan believes that this project will not only improve the educational environment, but also contribute to the development of Nepal including Jajarkot area as one of the symbols of the post-earthquake reconstruction. We also hope that this assistance will further strengthen the friendship between the people of Japan and Nepal, now and for future generations.

GGP was established to implement projects that directly benefit people at the grassroots level for the socio-economic development of communities. Since 1991, over 200 GGP projects have been completed in Nepal.

## BUSINESS BRIEF

### Let's Modernize And Brand Palpa Dhaka: President Dhakal

Chandra Prasad Dhakal, President of the Federation of Nepalese Industries and Commerce, said that if the Palpa Dhaka industry can be modernized and produced in large quantities, branding can be done in the international market as well through exports.

Inaugurating the 70th Annual General Meeting of Palpa Industry and Commerce Association today, Chairman Dhakal held the opinion that although there are many original products of Nepal that can be promoted in Nepal's export market, the state is lagging behind in marketing them.

President Dhakal said, 'Palpa can sell tourism, but since Palpa's Dhaka and Karuwa have created a national identity, what can be done in branding and marketing of these products, let the businessmen here come and make a plan, we will do what we can.'

President Dhakal also said that the bank interest rate is cheap and the investment environment in the country is becoming more comfortable, so there is no need to back down from investing in products that have made a national identity.

He also said that since Palpa is a well-known place in the country, tourism infrastructure should be built to attract more tourists from home and abroad.



He said, 'Ranimahal in Palpa is a historical heritage and it has a long history of more than a century in Nepal.

The possibility of attracting tourists should be explored by developing it. Tourism activities should be boosted through conservation, promotion and publicity of these assets.

Mentioning the fact that even when he was young, the citizens of Baglung used to come to Palpa for everything from health treatment to the local market and said that he also has an emotional connection with Palpa. Accordingly, he said that the current Palpa can also be a leader in market or other activities.

### 10 Percent Discount At Big Mart For Global IME Bank Debit And Credit Card Holders

Global IME Bank Limited is going to provide debit and credit card holders with a 10 percent discount on payment after purchasing essential goods at Big Mart every Saturday.

In order to attract the bank's debit and credit card issuers, the bank in collaboration with Bigmart has brought a discount plan of 10% or a maximum of 200 in all stores of

Bigmart. The discount scheme will be applicable only on every Saturday.

Keeping in mind the convenience of the customers, the bank has been coordinating with various organizations and bringing such schemes to directly benefit the customers.



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 been providing services from more than 1,000 service centers including 354 branch offices, 384 ATMs, 255 branchless banking services, 68 extension and revenue collection counters and 3 foreign representative offices.

The bank has been bringing in remittances from the United States of America, 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.

### Nepal Investment Mega Bank (NIMB) Opens New Branch In Ghurmi, Udaipur

Nepal Investment Mega Bank Limited has expanded a new branch in Ghurmi, Udaipur. The bank has brought the Ghurmi branch into operation in Udaipur District Katari Municipality Ward No. 14 from Tuesday.

Bank's Koshi Province Head Yashpal Kumar Tibrewal inaugurated the new branch. He said that this new branch will provide excellent banking services and facilities to the customers.

From Tuesday, all banking services have started from the new branch. Currently, the bank has 274 branch offices, 65 extension counters, 77 branchless banking and 266 ATMs.

### HICDP-School Building of Shree Mahendra Shanti Secondary School Inaugurated

Built with the Government of India's financial assistance at the cost of NRs.11.30 million under 'Nepal-India Development Cooperation, the School Building of Shree Mahendra Shanti Secondary School, Suryabinayak Municipality, Bhaktapur, was jointly inaugurated by various persons.

The building was inaugurated jointly to Durlav Thapa Chhetri, Member of House of Representatives, Constituency No.2 and Avinash Kumar Singh, First Secretary, Embassy of India, Kathmandu and other political leaders.

The Government of India grant under 'Nepal-India Development Cooperation' was utilized for the construction of triple storied school building with other facilities for Shree



Mahendra Shanti Secondary School.

This project was taken up as a High Impact Community Development Project (HICDP), under an Agreement between Government of India and Government of Nepal. This project was implemented through District Coordination Committee, Bhaktapur.

Member of Parliament, House of Representatives, Chief, District Coordination Committee, Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Suryabinayak Municipality, Political representatives and Chairman School Management Committee in their remarks appreciated the continued developmental support of the Government of India in upliftment of the people of Nepal in priority sectors.

Shree Mahendra Shanti Secondary School was established in 1952 as a primary School and subsequently upgraded as secondary School in 1995. This school is one of the oldest schools in the district. The school runs Classes from Nursery to 12th standard with total number of students at around 800, 45% of which are girls.



The set up created would be useful in providing better education facilities to students of Shree Mahendra Shanti Secondary School in Bhaktapur, Nepal and would create

an improved environment for learning as well as contribute to the development of education in this region.

### Nepal-Korea Infra Biz Night 2024 Held In Kathmandu

On Saturday, September 14, the Embassy of the Republic of Korea (RoK) hosted the Nepal-Korea Infra Biz Night 2024 in Kathmandu, marking the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Korea and Nepal.

The event was graced by Devendra Dahal, Minister for Physical Infrastructure and Transport, who expressed his congratulations on this notable occasion. He highlighted that the past 50 years have been marked by a strong foundation of respect and trust between the two nations, resulting in successful collaboration in various domains.

Furthermore, he urged the Korean government to consider offering long-term soft loans instead of grants to facilitate Nepal's progress and its advancement from least developed country status.

In his inaugural address, Park Taeyoung, the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Nepal, stated that the upcoming 2024 Nepal-Korea Infra Biz Night will open new avenues for investment for both Nepalese and Korean stakeholders.

He emphasized that Korean enterprises possess world-class

expertise and are prepared to engage in additional projects while contributing to capacity-building efforts in Nepal. The event saw a significant turnout of Korean and Nepalese business leaders, media representatives, and senior government officials.



South Korea has established itself as a middle power that fosters goodwill, friendship, and collaboration among nations. Nepal has reaped the benefits of Korea's economic growth, with Korean firms ranking as the fourth largest foreign investors in the country.

Additionally, numerous Koreans travel to Nepal each year to explore the mountains or visit Lumbini, the birthplace of the Buddha and a significant Buddhist pilgrimage site.

Ambassador Park highlighted the significance of private-to-private partnerships between Nepal and Korea, noting their effectiveness in addressing various challenges within Nepal's infrastructure sector.

He also sought the support of NKCCI in promoting business initiatives and fostering cooperation to enhance investments from Korean companies in Nepal, as well as to establish a network among entrepreneurs from both nations.

### The Private Sector Can Work Smoothly Only With Policy Stability: President Dhakal

Chandra Prasad Dhakal, President of Federation of Nepal Chamber of Commerce and Industry, has said that policy stability is necessary for the private sector to work smoothly.

Dhakal said that there is currently high liquidity in the banking system in Nepal and although the interest rate has decreased, the demand for loans from the private sector is low. He stated that the Federation has urged banks to provide flexibility to lend on their own terms, adding that excessive regulation could lead to a decline in confidence in both the banking sector and private businesses.

Chairman Dhakal informed that during the last investment conference, eight laws have been amended to increase investment and a draft of bilateral investment agreement has also been prepared.

President Dhakal urged that the fund should support the promotion of Nepal, even in the case of high foreign exchange reserves and positive balance of payments, but foreign investment could



## BUSINESS BRIEF

not be attracted.

During the meeting, the head of the mission, Sarwat Jahan, from IMF, said that the fund has come to support Nepal. He also said that the fund is always positive about giving importance to the private sector.

### Nepal Government Approved IFAD's Concessional Loan For 'Resilient High Value Agricultural Program'

Minister of Communications and Information Technology Prithvisubba Gurung informed that the cabinet



meeting approved concessional loan assistance worth about Rs. 9.45 billion from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) for 'Resilient High Value Agricultural Program' and approved the Ministry of Finance to sign the financial agreement.

Similarly, the government has formed a negotiating team to obtain grants and concessional loan assistance for the implementation of the South Asian Subregional Economic Cooperation Power Transmission Project.

The cabinet meeting held on 12 September formed a negotiation team under the leadership of the Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Finance to negotiate with the bank for the grant and subsidized loan assistance from the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

### Nepal Investment Mega Bank Open New Branch In Kanchanbari

Nepal Investment Mega Bank Limited has expanded a new branch in Kanchanbari, Morang. The new branch of Bank situated in Biratnagar Metropolitan City Ward No Morang District.



The Kanchanbari branch has been put into operation since Thursday. Including this branch, the number of branches of the bank has reached 273. All banking services have started from the new branch from Thursday. Yashpal Kumar Tibrewal, head of Koshi Province of the bank, inau-

gured the new branch.

In the opening program, the province chief Tibrewal said that the new branch will provide excellent banking services and facilities to the customers. At present, the bank has 273 branch offices, 65 extension counters, 77 branchless banking and 266 ATMs.

### Global IME Bank Awarded "Euromoney Awards For Excellence 2024" In Two Categories

Global IME Bank Limited has been honored with the Euromoney Awards for Excellence 2024, being recognized as Nepal's Best Bank 2024 and Nepal's Best Bank for ESG (Environmental, Social & Governance) among Nepali Banks and Financial Institutions (BFIs). Bank Chairman Chandra Prasad Dhakal and Chief Executive Officer Surendra Raj Regmi received the awards during a special function organized in Singapore.

The Euromoney Award is regarded as a coveted accolade in the global banking industry. Established in 1992, it recognizes outstanding performance in banking services across the globe. The Euromoney Group comprises renowned and experienced individuals from the financial sector, including former CEOs and Senior Executives of Reuters, Bloomsbury Publishing, HSBC UK, the Governor of the Central School of Ballet, Lehman Brothers, and Fintel, to name a few.

This is the second time Global IME Bank has been honored with this award. Previously, the Bank received the "Euromoney Award for Excellence 2022 - Best Bank of Nepal".

In addition to this award, Global IME Bank has been honored in various categories by numerous national and international organizations. The bank has received prestigious awards such as Bank of the Year 2014, Best Internet Bank 2016, Best Bank Award 2024, and Best Employer Award.



Global IME Bank is proud to receive this coveted award and vows to continue providing exemplary banking services in the future.

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**Buddha Air Offers Attractive Discount For Customers Of Nepal Investment Mega Bank Limited**



Customers of Nepal Investment Mega Bank Limited will get attractive discounts when traveling by Buddha Air.

In the agreement between Nepal Investment Mega Bank (NIMB) Limited and Buddha Air, NIMB customers and their families (fathers, mothers, wives, sons/daughters) will be given 8%

discount when purchasing air tickets of Buddha Air.

According to the agreement, in order to get a discount on the ticket, the customer who buys the ticket from Buddha Air counter has to pay through NIMB debit/credit card or Lakshya Kambachat app (mobile banking).

The bank believes that NIMB’s customers will directly benefit from this agreement. Along with quality banking services, NIMB has been arranging more facilities and discounts for its customers by making agreements with dozens of different service areas including hospitals, restaurants, shopping malls.

**FNCCI’s Activism Has Awakened Hope In The Economy: President Dhakal**

Chandra Prasad Dhakal, President of the Federation of Nepal Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that due to the federation’s activeness and continuous commitment, positive hope has been awakened in the country’s economy.

Addressing the 45th annual general meeting of the Lalitpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry today in Lalitpur, he said, “After the covid epidemic and the Russia-Ukraine war, like other countries in the world, Nepal’s economy was worried about what will happen.”

At that time, Sri Lankan air was also introduced here. About one and a half years after we came to the leadership, we worked in such a way that now there is hope. There are signs of economic recovery.”

Chairman Dhakal claimed that the federation itself has started work in collaboration with the government to alleviate the frustration of the common people, put pressure on the government by starting reform works to prevent the

economy from deteriorating further and to restore the previous situation after the covid, and as a result of that, positive results are now being seen.

He also said that the latest investment conference held by the Nepal government is different from the previous ones because of the federation.

He said - “Earlier, the investment as promised by the donor did not come. This time we searched for the reason why it did not come. Some of the laws were seen as obstacles and we took initiatives to amend them.

We also put pressure on the government. A working group was formed with our participation and eight laws were amended before the investment conference. We think that now it will be easier for the donor to bring the investment as per the commitment.”

He said that it is positive that Nepal’s political parties have a consensus on economic issues during the amendment of these laws.

He said - “Earlier, we have repeatedly asked the parties to agree on economic issues, that is, the country’s economy.” Therefore, I think that on the morning of the investment conference, even when eight laws were brought through the ordinance, all parties agreed, and everyone welcomed them.

We have seen that opposition parties protested even when an ordinance was issued earlier. Thus, due to the activism and advocacy of the Federation, all the powers of the country have gradually come to the same issue and the investment environment is also gradually improving.

At present, while visiting the district, President Dhakal said that the country should not only look for foreign investment, but also the capital that is scattered within the country can be consolidated and invested in big investments.

He also informed that Nepal Development Public Limited Company of 10 billion has been established with the participation of all the private sector in order to collect such capital and invest it in national level.



He said that through this company, even those who do not have enough capital to work can use it as equity and an environment can be created through this company where the funds scattered all over the country can be united and invested.

Presenting an example of the federation’s work in the past one and a half years to create an investment environment in the country and to improve the declining economy, Chairman Dhakal urged everyone to invest and benefit from this time as it is a good time for investment.

# Bioregionalism Satsang



BY: DIPAK GYAWALI

As with most activist movements worried about environmental degradation, bioregionalism too rose as a rallying point in the 1970s. Social and environmental activism saw its heyday and stalwarts in the 1980s and 1990s. Unfortunately, its history and effectiveness in the first quarter of the 21st Century has been insipid and disappointing. NGOs in the Global North have been tamed and domesticated to serve official procedural fetishism of SDGs, MDGs and COP platitudes, while their cousins in the Global South are political orphans, having been vilified and marginalized as "anti-developmentalists". In this historical desert, in early September this year, a brave group of old and young environmentalists gathered in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India to share their angst and to see if a new path forward could be forged.

How did this sad state of affairs arise even as global environmental degradation has gotten worse? Why has it not galvanized the younger generation (more of whose future is at stake than those of the oldies) to reverse the decline and come forth with more robust activism that would make a difference? I will speculate about that at the end of this essay, but first some background about the bioregionalism movement.

Political boundaries of nation-states are determined by military history and administrative boundaries therein by convenience of transport and communication. The logic of such boundary definitions often go against nature. Rivers as boundaries – a natural conclusion when armies of both sides find it easier to defend themselves – makes it near impossible to plan or execute irrigation, flood control or other projects in the riparian lands. River basin as a unit of planning or administration makes much sense, mostly to hydrologists but not for the powers-that-be. The same applies to movements of wildlife, rainfall, information and even people when the nation-state container is assumed to contain ALL social, economic and other activities, every other flow being "foreign".

This has prompted a long history of efforts to find more integrative approaches such as Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and today its new avatar, the nexus, with mixed results. Bioregionalism is an effort by those worried about alarming environmental degradation brought about by human activity to find an alter-

native path ahead that, unlike conventional environmentalism which is mostly a protest AGAINST current state of affairs, is also FOR something else. This tactic very much matches Global South views where being against something merely leads to being branded as against unquestioned hallowed development itself and thus politically suicidal.

I remember our own history in Nepal. When I was in Berkeley as a Fulbright student in the mid-1980s, I had the good fortune to be a "founding observer" of the International Rivers Network. My problem was that, as a Southern environmentalist intent on returning to Nepal after my studies, I could not accept the Northern NGO slogan of No Dams! I argued (unsuccessfully) for No Bad Dams! It was because, as a then government engineer with the Ministry of Water Resources, the former would have me hooted out in no time, while the latter slogan would remove the binary for-against straitjacket and allow space for debate and possibly improved change. It did: the anti-Arun-3 campaign that ensued allowed activists to successfully argue that the World Bank's proposal to develop the project at roughly five times the market cost was bad economics, that alternatives would give a third more electricity at half the cost and half the time. Ultimately, the campaign managed to see the alternative come to fruition.

The biggest attraction of bioregionalism is its giving co-space to human practices that have co-evolved with the local environment and its constraints to find a more sane lifestyle that differs from the suicidal infinite extractive consumption culture that currently dominates in the name of "progress" and monochrome "development". It begins by accepting unique ecology and cultural attributes of bioregions and proposes re-inhabitation, meaning giving value to that unique space, enriching it not just physically but also culturally, and not seeing it as merely an exchangeable resource to be exploited and left. It means giving value to food that is grown locally appropriate to the hydroclimatic and ecological conditions of the area; using local materials as far as possible in construction and interior décor; using production and services of local people to the maximum and not rendering them jobless migrants having to fulfil labour requirements elsewhere; and most importantly it means giving



primacy to socio-environmental stewardship or custodianship, not exploitative ownership.

All this requires a radical rethinking of governance, indeed representative democracy and the very notion of development itself as well. It is a tall order which the Bhopal Satsang wrestled with it in the South Asian context. In contrast with reductionist analytical approaches, synthesizing holistic ones often get overwhelmed with the plethora of cases and details, in the process missing the forest for the trees. Challenges to bioregionalism in South Asia, as indeed anywhere in the world, are enmeshed with many genuine concerns. First is that the movement is still India-centric and has not engaged enough with its South Asian neighbours. South Asia as a continent in itself has many bioregions that overlap between countries: coastal zones, deserts, islands, riverine deltas, mountains, flood plains and so on. An Indian can spend a lifetime in India itself with any one of these bioregions. However, the advantages of engaging across the border is manifold, especially in local knowledges and institutional practices

that not only can benefit neighbours but also India itself as it frees itself from its colonial extractive legacy. Nepal for instance has formalized local community management of resources (forests, drinking water, electricity etc.) that is but a dream in India (as late water secretary Ramaswamy Iyer remarked to me!).

For bioregionalism to succeed in making any headway in South Asia, education must be de-Macauley-ized to give space to traditional and local knowledge more in tune with bioregional concerns. Democracy that has been hijacked by rapacious business interests must give way to Gandhian Gram Swaraj and traditional decentralized governance structures. Urban built environment that is not only expanding uncontrollably but is also rapaciously and unsustainably colonizing surrounding resources must be re-engineered as Cities as a Force for Good (and not for Bad! CFGs including Desakota regions of neither urban nor rural spaces.). These concepts must find expression in local languages, including people's understanding of issues such as climate change and biodiversity loss and what it means for their future.

In doing all of these things, if bioregionalism is to find traction and support in mass politics, they have to address immediate fundamental concerns and how they help solve them, concerns such as the inexorable damage

from climate change and biodiversity loss that is leading to greater immiseration of the already poor. It is not an easy task because it entails conceptual and political battles with the entrenched forces of extractive capitalism that externalizes much of the costs to the poor and the environment (and internalizes profits within a narrow circle of 1% elites). It must address that fundamental political-economic problem posed by Karl Polanyi: should not markets serve society instead of what prevails currently of societies serving markets? Should finance capital (and

concomitant unlimited GDP growth) enjoy unquestioned divine rights of usury even at the expense of societal equity? Should development ("bikas") be unquestioningly worshipped even when it is mal-development and not apt-development ("ku-bikas and not "su-bikas") in much of actual practice today?

It is not a question of whether it can be done: it has to be done if humanity and much of life on earth is not to be extinguished. The question is how? First and foremost, new alliances have to be forged among like-minded and concerned folks, who certainly won't be in full

agreement but maybe only in 20 or 30% of the broader concerns. It will require new activism's networking skills across the region's myriad overlaps. It will also require a new philosophical approach to governance that values localization of production and consumption over globalized but fragile (as Covid and other conflicts have shown) value chains. In this, the idea of water and energy footprints and their reduction will have to play a key role in future environmental activism.

A very small beginning was made in Bhopal, a first step in a journey of a thousand kilometers. Which is why the word "satsang" was chosen in the title: it is a religious word ("gathering of truth seeking collegium") hijacked for common civic ends. The small gathering Bhopal was just such a meeting of "sat" seeking individuals that just need to expand their network and joint activism programs for the greater global good.

*{Those wanting to know more about South Asia Bioregionalism Working Group or interested to team up for networking can learn more from: <https://vikalpsangam.org/south-asia-bioregionalism-working-group/> as well as: [https://kalpavriksh.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Nation-states-are-destroying-the-world.-Could-bioregions-be-the-answer\\_-\\_openDemocracy.pdf](https://kalpavriksh.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Nation-states-are-destroying-the-world.-Could-bioregions-be-the-answer_-_openDemocracy.pdf) and: <https://in.boell.org/sites/default/files/2022-08/uncovering-pre-district-bioregions-of-i-n-d-i-a-south-asia-bioregionalism-working-group-.pdf> }*





# DASHAIN FESTIVAL Festival of Unity

*As the Dashain festival draws near, a wave of activity sweeps across Nepal. Despite numerous transformations over the years, the allure of the festival remains intact. In addition to venerating Durga and the Goddess, individuals perceive the occasion as an opportunity for financial expenditure and shopping. From the less fortunate to the wealthy, everyone has their unique tastes. The festival asserts itself as a celebration for all.*

By A CORRESPONDENT

As Dashain, the most significant and lengthy Hindu festival, approaches Nepali households, the ambiance has shifted noticeably, with individuals hastening to return home to partake in the festivities with their families. While various regions have distinct customs for celebrating Dashain or Navaratri, Nepal possesses its own unique

traditions. In the Kathmandu Valley and Newar communities across the nation, age-old practices continue to be observed. This is particularly noteworthy as they maintain the tradition of venerating the Shaktipith in accordance with established rituals. The festival in the Valley is distinctive. Unlike other areas of Nepal, the Dashain celebration in

the Kathmandu Valley exhibits a unique character that is not found in many other regions. This period marks the height of worship dedicated to the Shaktipith. Nevertheless, Dashain is gradually evolving into a national celebration, embraced by all communities as a representation of unity. In various parts of the country, it is regarded as an occasion for





family gatherings.

Numerous aspects of the Dashain festival are also observed in the southern plains of Nepal, known as Madhesh, where several significant Shaktipiths are located. The manner of celebrating Dashain in this region differs from that of the Valley.

### Navaratri

Dashain commences concurrently with the onset of Navaratri. The inaugural day of Navaratri is marked by the worship and planting of jamara within households. The first day of Dashain is referred to as Gha-

tasthapana, which translates to the planting of a pot. On this day, a Kalash, a sacred vessel of water representing Goddess Durga, is positioned in the prayer area. The Kalash is filled with holy water and covered with cow dung, upon which seeds are sown. A small rectangular mound of sand is created, with the Kalash placed at its center.

The surrounding sand bed is also sown with grains. The Ghatsthapana ceremony is conducted at a specific auspicious time as determined by astrologers. At this precise moment, the priest recites

a greeting and invokes Goddess Durga to bless the vessel with her divine presence. By the tenth day, the seeds will have sprouted into five or six inches of yellow grass, known as jamara. During the final five days, this sacred grass is placed on the

heads of younger individuals by their elders while applying tika. The jamara serves as a symbol of both Goddess Durga and the blessings bestowed by the elders.

The ninth day is called Nawami: Temples of the mother goddess are filled with people from dawn to dusk. Animals, mostly black buffaloes, are slaughtered to honor Durga, the goddess of victory and power, and to seek her blessings. Military bands play war tunes, cannons boom, and officers with beautifully decorated medals stand in full uniform.

When the ceremony ends, the courtyard is ankle-deep in blood. On this day the god Vishwa Karma, the god of creativity, is also worshipped. All the factories, vehicles, all the machines and all the things that we live by are worshipped.

People also offer sacrifices to







venture near the Maitidevi temple during the day and everyone, except tantrics (shamans), invariably stay away from the place at night. Tirtha Man Bajracharya, the head priest of the temple, says, "The oldest structure was built in 628 AD by Amshu Verma, a warrior under the Lichhavi king Shiva Dev" - 13 centuries before Chandra Shamsher.

**Sankata Temple**

Sankata Temple is located in a crowded but quiet Tebahal colony next to the crowded and noisy New Road Market. You can enter the temple area through any of the lanes that connect the market and the Tebahal colony.

**Kalikasthan**

Devi is the great Goddess of the Hindus, the consort of Shiva, and is worshipped in various forms corresponding to her two aspects: benevolence and ferocity. She is Uma, 'light'; Gauri, 'yellow or brilliant'; Parvati, 'the mountaineer'; and Jagatmata, 'the mother of the world' in her milder form. Her terrible ema-

all moving machines like cars, airplanes, trucks etc. to get the blessings of Goddess Durga for protecting the vehicles and their occupants from accidents during the year. The whole day is colorful.

From Ghatasthapana to Dashami (10 days), people worship all the nine forms of Durga with the belief that the Goddess is present to give her blessings to the people. On the first day of Navratri - Ghatasthapana, devotees sow jamara (small seeds). It is believed that jamara is the favorite plant of Goddess Durga, so devotees offer jamara to make her happy and get her blessings.

In some parts of India, Dussehra is considered the focal point of the festival, making it effectively 10 days instead of 9. Additionally, since Navratri depends on the lunar calendar, in some years it may be celebrated for 8 days, with Dussehra on the 9th.

Important temples in Kathmandu Devotees visit various temples

of goddesses - Bhadrakali, Shova Bhagawati, Manamaijudevi (Pachali), Guheshwari, Bangalamukhi, Chamunda (Shankmul) and more in the capital during Dashain.

And nine forms of Goddess Durga - Shailaputri, Brahmacharini, Chandraghanta, Kushmanda, Skandamata, Katyayini, Kaalratri, Mahagauri and Siddhidaatri - are worshipped for the nine days during this festival. The nine days of Durga Puja are called Navratri.

**Maitidevi Temple**

Rarely anyone dares to





nations are Durga, ‘the inaccessible’; Kali, ‘the black’; Chandi, ‘the fierce’; and Bhairavi, ‘the terrible’.

Since 1900 on the Nepali calendar (1957 AD), the incarnation of Maha Shakti and the descendants of Shiv Kali’s priests (pujaris) began with Harka Bahadur Shrestha (a Newar), who came from Thimi, near Bhaktapur. His only child, a girl named Krishna Kumari Shrestha, married a boy named Man Bahadur Khadka, a non-Newar. At present, their descendants are the chief priests of the temple.

### Bhadrakali

According to ancient scriptures in the Vayu Purana and Mahabharata, Bhadrakali was created by the wrath of Devi when Daksha insulted Shiva during the great Ashvamedha Yagna (horse sacrifice). According to the Tantra Rahasya, she emerged from the northern (Uttaramnaya) face (Amnayas) of Shiva, which is blue in color and has three eyes.

It is believed that Bhadrakali was a local deity that was assimilated into mainstream Hinduism, especially Shaiva mythology. She sometimes assumes a terrifying aspect and is depicted with three eyes and four, 12, or 18 hands. She carries a number of weapons, with flames flowing from her head and a small tusk protruding from her mouth.

### Naxal Bhagwati

The temple of Naxal Bhagwati is located in the center of the Naxal township, close to Pashupatinath, Dillibazar and the Narayanhiti Museum. Situated at an intersection, the temple stands tall and distinct despite the encroachment of nearby shops, concrete buildings and busy traffic. It never fails to attract devotees who come in and out of the temple throughout the day. The features of Naxal Bhagwati are remarkably the same as other ‘Devi’ (Goddess) temples - its three tiered roof, two of which



are copper plated, and carvings of other deities surrounding the temple.

### Nardevi Temple

Despite a number of other temples in the locality, Nardevi is easily distinguishable. The three tiered structure with one of the roofs plated in gold and its crafted pillars identify the Nardevi Mandir. According to historical data, the temple is believed to have been established in the 9th century AD by Gunakamadev, the founder of Kathmandu.

### Dakshinkali

Dakshinkali is located 18 km south of Ratnapark, Kathmandu. The ancient Kalika temple is located south of the capital, which some believe is why it was named Dakshinkali (dakshin means ‘south’ in Nepali). The Dakshinkali temple is dedicated to Kali, the fearsome form of Lord Siva’s consort, Parvati.

The myth is that in the 17th century, an oracle in the form of a dream told King Pratap Malla to build a temple to the goddess. It was said that this would bring him prosperity and that no epidemic would befall his subjects. The king deciphered the omen and the temple was built.

### Shobha Bhagwati

For Hindus, 32 Lachin is a trait of great significance. It is believed that there are 32 attributes of

perfection, mostly emphasized on women, leading to prosperity and happiness. The name ‘Shobha’, in the same context, means ‘brilliance’ (derived from Sanskrit) or someone endowed with ‘32 lachin’. As the name suggests, Shobha Bhagwati is believed to be a goddess of perfection and brilliance.

### Significance of Dashain

Dashain is one of the most important Hindu festivals that is celebrated with great joy all over Nepal. This festival usually falls in the month of Sep-



tember or October and is actually celebrated for 15 days.

It starts from the bright lunar fortnight (Shukla Paksha) and ends on the full moon day (Poornima) according to the Nepalese annual calendar. The greatest Hindu festival, Dashain honors a great conquest of the gods over the evil demons. The symbol of power, Goddess Durga is worshipped during this festival.

This festival is actually the ceremony of reunion and fun. People who live far away from their home or homeland, revisit their home and get together with their families. Similarly, parents buy new clothes for their children. People enjoy eating delicious food and playing many games, including cards. People invite guests, organize feasts, visit their relatives' houses, fly kites, build bamboo swings and engage in various entertaining activities.

Throughout Nepal, Goddess Durga is worshipped in all her manifestations with innumerable pujas, abundant offerings and thousands of animal sacrifices for the ritual holy bath, drenching the Goddess in blood for days.

This year, the first day of the Dashain festival - Ghatasthapana - falls on October 3. The seventh day Pulpati is celebrated on October 5, followed by Asthami on October 6 and Nawami and Dashami on October 7 and 8 respectively. In addition, the festival continues for 5 more days till October 17, which is known as Kojagrat Purnima.

In preparation for Dashain, every home is cleaned and beautifully decorated, painted as an invitation to the Mother Goddess to visit and bless the house with good fortune. During this time, reunions of distant and near relatives take place in every household. The market is filled with shoppers looking for new clothes, gifts, luxuries, and huge supplies of temple offerings for the gods, as well as food for the family feast.

Thousands of sheep, goats, ducks, chickens and water buffalo are being prepared for the great slaughter. All kinds of organizations are closed for ten to fifteen days. Workers are hard to find; from the poor to the rich, everyone enjoys the festive mood. The aroma of 'Vijaya Dashami' is ev-

erywhere.

The festival celebrates the various victories of Hindu gods over demons, such as Lord Ram defeating Ravan in a duel and Goddess Durga defeating the buffalo demon Mahisasur, as well as many other demons. The festival as a whole is a celebration of the triumph of good over evil, and the stories are told throughout the ceremony to provide moral examples for the community.

Some of the activities during Dashain include fiesta-style parties, enjoying home-cooked meals, and flying kites to represent freedom. The festival usually coincides with the end of the monsoon season, and some locals believe that flying kites communicates with God to end the rainy season! People sacrifice a lot of animals during this festival, most of which are goats, sheep, chickens or buffaloes. However, the trend of sacrificing animals is changing to fruits and vegetables as the slaughter of animals is nowhere mentioned in the Hindu scriptures and the animal rights activists strongly condemn it. Some of the important days during Dashain are

### **Day 1 (Ghatasthapana)**

Ghatasthapana is the first day of Bada Dashain. A male member of the family plants jama (usually barley seeds) in moist sand. By the tenth day of the festival, the seeds will have grown into yellow grass, which is used with tika to bless people with prosperity and happiness.

### **Day 7 (Fulpati)**

The special essence of the festival comes from this day. On this auspicious day, a military parade is organized at Hanuman Dhoka. Nepal Army, Nepal Po-





lice, Civil Service, Band Music and Panchebaja also join the Fulpati parade. People clean their houses and decorate their houses with flowers. Today (Oct. 19) is Fulpati and most of the celebrations in our homes will take place today! In our Dhading home, the children will fly kites, play on the traditional swing and end the day with a barbecue and a trip to the movies! The children from our Birgunj home will start the day with puja (prayers), followed by kite flying and a trip to the Parwanipur market where there will

be a huge fair!

#### **Day 8 (Maha Ashtami)**

The festivities continue as Maha Ashtami. Thousands of goats, sheep, buffaloes, ducks and chickens are sacrificed in the temple of the goddess from almost every house. In Newar community, Kuchi Bhoje is prepared in which ritually people should eat two pathi of beaten rice including various kinds of dishes in a banana leaf.

#### **Day 9 (Maha Nawami)**

The ninth day of the fes-

tival is known as Maha Nawami. On this day, the gates of the Taleju temple in Basantapur are opened to the public. Thousands of devotees go and pay obeisance to the Goddess throughout the day. This day is also known as Viswakarma Day.

#### **Day 10 (Tika/Vijaya Dashami)**

The tenth day of the festival is known as Vijaya Dashami or "Tika". On this auspicious day, tika and jamara (sewn on day 1) are taken from elders and blessings including "dakshin" (money) are received. These festivities continue for four days until the full moon rises. During this time, families and relatives who live apart meet and take blessings from the elders.

At a time when the country is facing several economic and political challenges, the festival also brings relief to all. The festival helps to revive the economy as people buy the goods.



JAPANESE ENVOY KIKUTA YUTAKA

# Charismatic Diplomat

*Although envoys frequently rotate, certain diplomats leave an indelible mark on their host countries. Ambassador Kikuta Yutaka of Japan, who began his tenure in Nepal in March 2021 during the height of the COVID-19 crisis, made substantial contributions to help Nepal address the challenges posed by the pandemic. He also worked tirelessly to strengthen the ties of friendship between the citizens and governments of both nations.*

By Keshab Poudel

The Japanese Ambassador to Nepal, Kikuta Yutaka, is known for his humility, gentleness, and eagerness to engage with individuals from various backgrounds. However, his initial one and a half years in Nepal were constrained by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Upon his arrival in Nepal during the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ambassador Kikuta Yutaka, an experienced diplomat from Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, encountered a situation where daily life had come to a halt and development initiatives were entirely suspended due to lockdown measures and other health protocols.

Faced with inadequately equipped medical facilities, the country has been grappling with a significant health crisis. With a rising number of fatalities and patients in hospitals, there has been an urgent demand for emergency medical supplies, including ventilators, oxygen machines, and other essential life-saving equipment.

As the ambassador of Japan, a nation known for its amicable and reliable relations to Nepal, he took the initiative to provide essential emergency medical assistance.



Kikuta, a seasoned diplomat, promptly collaborated with the Nepalese government to safeguard the lives of its citizens. Following the presentation of his credentials on April 16, 2021, Ambassador Kikuta Yutaka began his active engagement with Nepalese officials and the pop-

ulace.

In the initial phase of his tenure, the ambassador's responsibilities were demanding, as he dedicated a significant portion of his time to distributing emergency medical supplies, including ventilators and oxygen



machines, while also keeping his government informed about the dire health circumstances in Nepal.

Despite arriving in the midst of a significant global crisis, Ambassador Kikuta embraced and explored the rich culture, natural beauty, and vibrant lifestyle of Nepal. He conveyed his admiration for the country's diverse cultural heritage and landscapes.

“Both Japan and Nepal are mountainous nations that have historically contended with challenging natural environments, facing common issues such as earthquakes, floods, and climate change,” stated Ambassador Kikuta. He further remarked, “Nepal stands to benefit from Japan’s experiences in post-war reconstruction, democratic progress, and disaster management. The increasing Nepali community in Japan serves as a crucial asset in addressing Japan’s declining birthrate and aging population, and I earnestly hope that the insights and experiences gained in this context will also contribute positively to Nepal’s future.”

### A seasoned diplomat

In his initial year, Ambassador Kikuta’s activities were constrained by the pandemic and associated proto-



cols. However, as the situation improved and Nepal began to reopen, he took the opportunity to engage with various stakeholders across the country, attending events related to development initiatives.

In addition, Ambassador Kikuta’s term has coincided with a significant moment to reflect on the Nepal-Japan student exchange program.

“Over the past two years, we regrettably had to halt nearly all forms of gatherings due to the Covid-19 pan-

dem, making this the first occasion for me to host such a large number of guests at my residence,” the ambassador reflected during a celebration of the 120th anniversary on May 24, 2022. The year 2022 commemorated the 120th anniversary of the Nepalese government’s initiative to send eight young individuals to Japan for their studies, who arrived at Yokohama on June 17, 1902.

Over the past three and a half years, Ambassador Kikuta Yutaka, known for his gentle demeanor, has adeptly navigated the numerous challenges faced by Nepal. During these years he also monitored national and local elections, in the case of the national election in 2022, with the Japanese State Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Takei Shunsuke. He has so far collaborated with six different governments led by three prominent leaders: K.P. Sharma Oli, Sher Bahadur Deuba, and Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda.

Following the relaxation of restrictions and the reopening of the nation, he welcomed several high-profile visits from Japan, notably including the Japanese Foreign Minister.

For the first time in five years after the visit of Foreign Minister Kono in January 2019, the Japanese Foreign



Minister visited Nepal last May. Foreign Minister Ms. Kamikawa Yoko successfully undertook her inaugural visit to Nepal. This visit marked a significant milestone in enhancing the bilateral relations between Japan and Nepal.

Additionally, the penetration of the Nagdhunga Tunnel, which had been delayed for an extended period due to the COVID-19 pandemic, represents a significant achievement. This tunnel, constructed with the Official Development Assistance (ODA), is poised to revolutionize Nepal's transportation infrastructure.

As a diplomat, Ambassador Kikuta tends to speak sparingly, choosing instead to attentively listen to the perspectives of others. Whether at public events, visiting development projects, inaugurating facilities, or signing agreements, he emphasizes Nepal's inherent beauty and its potential for transformation, and Japan's assistance toward Nepali people to realize it. For Nepalese scholars returning from Japan to further their education, Ambassador Kikuta encourages them to apply their acquired knowledge and skills for the greater good of the Nepali people. In terms of support for Nepal, Ambassador Kikuta has remained tirelessly engaged.

Japan has actively engaged in collaborative initiatives with the Government of Nepal across various domains, including education, healthcare, and institutional development aimed at enhancing governance.

Additionally, efforts have been made in the infrastructure sector, with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) serving as the executing body. The Ambassador noted that a significant advantage of Japan's economic cooperation lies in its diverse array of programs that

facilitate assistance not only at the governmental level but also through multiple stakeholders.

Ambassador Kikuta expressed satisfaction regarding the successful completion of the Melamchi Water Supply Project, which aims to improve the living standards of the residents of Kathmandu, highlighting Japan's support for the essential Water Treatment Plant (WTP) located in Sundarijal. He further asserted that EXPO 2025 OSAKA, KANSAI,



JAPAN presents a valuable opportunity for Nepal to attract additional foreign investment by promoting the theme "Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali."

The Ambassador underscored the deep-rooted connection between Japan and Nepal, emphasizing the strong bonds between the citizens of both nations, which have fostered enduring friendship.

"In this context, I can only express my hope that the citizens of Nepal will effectively utilize Japan's support. I frequently receive expressions of gratitude from the Nepalese,

acknowledging Japan's longstanding friendship and its assistance, which is offered without ulterior motives.

However, I consistently emphasize that Japan does have a vested interest in Nepal; specifically, Japan's interests lie in the peace, stability, and development of the nation. I also convey that Japan's aid, which is derived from the hard-earned taxes of the Japanese populace, should not be viewed as charity but rather as an investment in Nepal's promising future," stated Ambassador Kikuta.

During a farewell reception for the JDS Fellows at his residence last month, he remarked, "Your experiences will significantly aid in the advancement of Nepal. The recent substantial outflow of the youth may present challenges for the nation in the medium to long term."

"As government officials, it is imperative that you leverage the experience, skills, technology, and management expertise acquired in Japan for the benefit of Nepal's future. I emphasize that Japan's support is not merely charitable; it represents an investment in Nepal's promising future. You stand as a symbol of hope and are poised to play a crucial role in the nation's development. It is both your responsibility and your capability to achieve this."

In his efforts to promote cultural exchange in Nepal, he recently welcomed the esteemed Japanese pianist, Mr. Tateno Izumi, who performed a left-hand recital at his residence in Kathmandu. The event was attended by nearly 100 individuals from various sectors, including heads of diplomatic missions based in Kathmandu, honorary advisors, and others.



# Bilateral Meeting

*Foreign Minister Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba Held Bilateral Meeting With the Foreign Minister Of Canada.*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba, held an official bilateral meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada Mélanie Joly, at latter's office in Global Affairs Canada in Ottawa. The meeting was held in an atmosphere of utmost cordiality and friendship.

During the meeting, the two Foreign Ministers reviewed the state of friendly bilateral relations between Nepal and Canada. They exchanged views on further promoting Nepal-Canada relations in various areas of mutual interest, including trade, investment, development cooperation, and promoting people to people contacts.

The two sides expressed satisfaction over the cooperative relations that Nepal and Canada are enjoying ever since the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1965 and stressed on the need to maintain high level communication and exchanges and explore further areas of mutually beneficial economic partnership between the two countries.

The two Foreign Ministers took note with happiness the milestone 60th year of diplomatic relations between Nepal and Canada next year and expressed commitment to further elevate the friendly relations by promoting cooperation in the field of education and tourism.

Foreign Minister Dr. Rana expressed sincere thanks to the Foreign Minister of Canada for the Canadian cooperation during the difficult times of the earthquakes of 2015 and COVID-19 pandemic. The two Foreign Ministers also underlined the importance of cooperation in international forums in the agendas of shared interest, such as, promoting multilateralism, addressing climate change and implementing the sustainable development goals.

Foreign Minister Dr. Rana appreciated Foreign Minister of Canada for taking initiative of convening women foreign ministers' meeting in Canada which she believed would be an important platform of deliberations on key contemporary issues impacting women and promoting their participation and empowerment in shaping of the agendas.

Foreign Minister Dr. Rana extended cordial

invitation to the Foreign Minister of Canada Joly for an official visit to Nepal coinciding the 60th year of diplomatic relations next year.

Nepal and Canada enjoy friendly relations based on mutual respect and understanding share common values of democracy, rule of law and respect for diversity.

In the meeting, Foreign Minister Dr. Rana was accompanied by Ambassador of Nepal to Canada Bharat Raj Paudyal and other officials from the Embassy. Foreign Minister of Canada was accompanied by senior officials of the Global Affairs Canada.

Foreign Minister Dr. Rana is in Canada, at the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada the Melanie Joly, leading a Nepali delegation to the Women Foreign Ministers' Meeting to be held in Toronto on 19-20 September 2020.

Similarly, Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba held a meeting with the Chair and Members of Canada-Nepal Parliamentary Friendship Group (CNPFPG) in Ottawa.

The Chair of Canada-Nepal Parliamentary Friendship Group and Member of Parliament Sonia Sidhu warmly welcomed Foreign Minister Dr. Rana at the Parliament Hill and expressed happiness over the first visit of a Nepali Foreign Minister to Canada.

The two sides reviewed the friendly relations between the parliaments of Nepal and Canada and stressed on the need to promote regular exchanges, experience sharing between the Members of Parliament of the two countries.

Stating that Canada-Nepal Parliamentary Friendship Group stands as an important platform for sharing of experiences and learning from each other's democratic processes,

Foreign Minister Honourable Dr. Rana thanked the Honourable Members of Parliament and Senators for their service to the promotion of bilateral relations between the two countries and the parliaments. She also informed about the formation of a Nepal-Canada Parliamentary Friendship Group in the Federal Parliament of Nepal.

Foreign Minister expressed the confidence that the two parliaments will be able to promote greater exchanges and collaborations



through these important mechanisms.

Chair of Canada-Nepal Parliamentary Friendship Group, Honourable Sonia Sidhu highlighted the potential areas of cooperation between the parliamentarians of Canada and Nepal and enrich the friendly relations. She also appreciated the progress Nepal has made in gender equality and empowerment of women and girls with greater representation of Nepali women in the parliament and local government as well as enhanced contribution of them in public life.

Members of Parliament expressed happiness to welcome Nepal's Foreign Minister in Ottawa for the first time that may inject new dynamism in the bilateral relations between the two countries and the parliaments and open further areas of collaboration in the future.

The two sides expressed satisfaction over the increasing people to people relations and contribution of Nepali diasporas in this process.

During the meeting, Foreign Minister Dr. Rana was accompanied by Ambassador of Nepal to Canada, Bharat Raj Paudyal and other officials from the Embassy.

Later, Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. Rana visited the Embassy of Nepal in Ottawa. Ambassador Paudyal briefed Foreign Minister about the activities of the Embassy and its priorities for the coming months and years.

Foreign Minister also keenly observed the works done by the Embassy and instructed to strive for exploring and promoting opportunities for economic partnership in priority areas.

# Nepal-India Hydropower Collaboration

*With the outdated notion that India cannot import electricity from Nepal now dispelled, Kul Man Ghising, the Managing Director of the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), is committed to advancing the 40 MW Rahughat Hydropower Project. This endeavor, marking the third hydropower project supported by India, aims to bolster the partnership between Nepal and India in the hydropower domain over the next ten months of his second term. After the completion of the project, it will symbolize new milestone in Nepal-India Energy Partnership.*

By A CORRESPONDENT

As the hydropower trade between Nepal and India reaches unprecedented levels with the export of electricity from Nepal, MD Kul Man Ghising has redirected his efforts towards the completion of the Rahughat hydropower project. This project is currently under construction with a concessional loan from the Exim Bank of India and is expected to be finalized within the last ten months of his tenure.

Having played a pivotal role in the development of Nepal's 19 MW Trishuli Hydropower Project, the largest project at the time in 1963, and the 11 MW Devighat Cascade Project in the 1980s, the successful completion of the 40 MW Rahughat Hydropower Project will mark another significant achievement in the partnership and co-operation between Nepal and India in the hydropower domain.

The project, which has faced delays spanning several decades, has now become a symbol of national pride. Recognizing its significance, MD Ghising, a figure renowned for his decisive action and dedication, has prioritized the advancement of this initiative. He appears fully prepared to allocate whatever time is necessary to ensure its success.

MD Ghising's connection to the project is also personal; he assumed the role of project manager in 2014 when it was nearly on the brink of failure. Due to unsatisfactory performance



from the contractors, MD Ghising made the decisive move to terminate the contract with the construction firm and subsequently redesigned the project, enhancing its capacity from 32 MW to 40 MW.

Despite encountering numerous challenges, the project has made significant strides. On September 19, an official holiday, MD Ghising made the journey to the project site, located 300 kilometers west of Kathmandu, to expedite the construction efforts.

Since the commencement of his first term, Managing Director Ghising has utilized official holidays to conduct inspections of various projects, pro-

viding guidance and essential support to project managers in order to address challenges. Throughout the final stages of construction, MD Ghising made regular visits to the 456 MW Upper Tamakoshi Project.

## Construction Status

The 40 MW Rahughat Hydropower Project, which is being developed by Raghuganga Hydropower Ltd, a subsidiary of the Nepal Electricity Authority, has reached an 80 percent completion rate. The overall progress of the construction stands at 80 percent.

This project, located in the Raghugan-



ga Rural Municipality of Myagdi District, is expected to be completed by the following June, with financial assistance in the form of a concessional loan from the EXIM Bank of India to the Government of Nepal.

The concrete lining of the 6.2 km tunnel is currently progressing rapidly. Due to challenging geological conditions, the entire tunnel requires complete concrete lining. To date, one kilometer of the main tunnel has been successfully lined with concrete. Additionally, of the 1050 meters of the main tunnel designated to channel water to the powerhouse, a 130 mm pressure pipe has been installed.

Upon the completion of the primary civil structures of the power plant, the installation of turbines, generators, and other electromechanical equipment will commence. The facility will feature two units, each with a capacity of 20/20 MW for electricity generation.

The civil construction of the dam site has been finalized, and the necessary equipment, including the dam gate, has been delivered to the project location. Currently, approximately 30 percent of the sand thickening pond (decenter) construction has been accomplished. Work on the headworks, which had been halted due to inclement weather, is set to resume shortly.

MD Ghisingh, who also serves as the Chairman of the Raghuganga Hydropower Ltd. Managing Committee, conducted a site inspection and engaged with the project management team, consultants, and contractors involved in the construction process.

MD Ghisingh emphasized the need for a coordinated schedule to address the various challenges faced by the project, aiming for completion by June of the following year. Despite the challenges posed by the difficult geographical conditions, the Covid-19 pandemic, and seismic events, the project has made significant progress towards completion through persistent efforts.



“Given the ongoing interest from all stakeholders in the project’s completion, we must exert our final efforts to ensure its conclusion within the current fiscal year and expedite the work. We will provide the necessary resources to facilitate this,” stated Managing Director Ghising. “We should finalize the construction timeline within a week to ensure completion by June, with all parties signing off to proceed accordingly. As the concrete lining work presents a challenge, it is advisable to accelerate construction by increasing the workforce.”

Due to the project’s immobility from the site specified in the approved Initial Environmental Assessment (IEE) report, it became necessary to relocate stones because of a shortage of sand and gravel. An interim order was issued by the single bench of the then Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Cholendra Shamsher Rana, on 29 Asar 2078, prohibiting any diversion of the river’s natural course until a final decision was reached regarding the writ, as the Kaligandaki river holds significant religious, historical, and ecological value.

Raghuganga Hydropower Limited (RGHPL) was founded in March 2017 with the aim of generating 40 MW of electricity in the Gandaki Province of Myagdi District, Nepal. The project is

wholly owned by the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA). Funding for this initiative has been secured through a soft loan from the EXIM Bank of India.

The plant is expected to produce an annual energy output of approximately 247.89 GWh, with 137.71 GWh classified as firm energy in a year with 90% reliability. It has the capacity to generate peak power during the dry season for a duration of six hours at its maximum installed capacity. The project will yield around 247.9 million units of electricity each year, which can be dispatched for four hours each day.

Electricity generated by the Raghuganga Hydroelectric Project will be transmitted via a 0.6 km long 220 kV double circuit transmission line, linking the RGHEP Power House switchyard to the Dana Kushma line as part of the Dana Kushma 220 kV Transmission Line Project.

Upon completion of the project by June of the following year, it will represent a significant achievement in Nepal-India collaboration and partnership within the hydropower sector. The recent site visit by MD Ghisingh and the issuance of directives are noteworthy developments in this context.

## MIDDLE BHOTEKOSHI

# Final Stage

*Following the inspection conducted by State Minister for Energy, Water Resources, and Irrigation Purna Bahadur Tamam, along with NEA Managing Director Kul Man Ghising, efforts to expedite the transmission line construction are underway, with the aim of completing the 102 MW Middle Bhotekoshi project within a month.*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Just two weeks prior, an agreement was reached to commence the construction of the 220 kV transmission line essential for transmitting electricity generated by the Middle Bhotekoshi Hydropower to the Barahabise Substation. On the morning of September 21, Minister of State for Energy, Water Resources, and Irrigation Purna Bahadur Tamam, accompanied by NEA Managing Director Kul Man Ghising, visited the construction site to assess progress. With extensive experience in the construction industry, State Minister Tamam is adept at addressing the concerns of local communities and contractors. Consequently, he chose to inspect the site alongside Managing Director Ghising. During their visit, they instructed the project management team, consultants, and construction personnel to ensure that electricity generation is achieved within the next month.

MD Ghising has dedicated nearly all of his public holidays, including Saturdays, to overseeing construction sites. This week, he was joined by Minister Tamang.

The 102 MW Middle Bhotekoshi Hydropower Project, which has faced nearly a year of delays due to local opposition regarding the installation of the conductor for the 220 kV transmission line, is now poised to commence electricity generation within a month.

Following a consensus reached with local residents concerning the construction of a two-kilometer transmis-



sion line from the project's switchyard in Bahrabise Municipality-5 to the NEA's Bahrabise Substation in District 3, the wire installation process has commenced. The work on the 220 kV single circuit transmission line is expected to be finalized before the Dashain festival.

The local opposition was resolved after an agreement was signed on September 13, in the presence of several officials, including Minister of Power, Water Resources and Irrigation Deepak Khadka, Minister of State Purna Bahadur Tamang, Federal Member of Parliament for Sindhupalchok-2 Mohan Bahadur Basnet, Joint Secretary of the Ministry Sandeep Kumar Dev, NEA Managing Director Kulman Ghising, Head of Bahrabise Municipality Balkrishna Basnet, Ward Presidents, Assistant Chief District Officer, and the President of the Chamber of

Commerce and Industry.

The resumption of construction on the transmission line, which had been on hold for approximately 14 months, is now underway due to this agreement. The project, overseen by Chilime Jalvidyut Company Limited, a subsidiary of the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), is in the final phase of the 102 MW Middle Bhotekoshi Hydropower Project, which is anticipated to commence electricity generation within a month.

During his visit, State Minister Tamang urged the contractors to accelerate the remaining tasks and ensure that all project management personnel remain on-site until completion. Once the Middle Bhotekoshi hydropower project begins producing electricity, the Bahrabise substation, constructed by NEA, will also be energized



with this power. The Barabishe 220-132 kV substations were completed last year.

In light of ongoing obstructions, NEA has implemented a temporary alternative solution for the evacuation of electricity from Middle Bhotekoshi. The electricity transmitted to the Bahrbise substation via the 220 kV transmission lines will be stepped down to 132 kV at the substation and subsequently delivered to the national grid through the 132 kV transmission line.

To facilitate this, the company is currently working on utilizing the 132 kV transmission line established by Shivashree Hydropower, the developer of the 22 MW Upper Chaku A Hydropower Project, to connect to the Bahrbise Substation.

The project is nearing completion. Following the construction of the dam, water has been released for testing purposes. The main tunnel, measuring 7,124 meters in length, has been completed. Although the water filling test commenced in February of the previous year, experts identified water leakage in approximately 1,400 meters of the main tunnel. After the necessary repairs and enhancements are finalized, the tunnel will undergo further testing. Currently, the cleaning process of the tunnel is underway, and it is scheduled to be filled with water in 15 days.

The civil construction work at the power plant has been finalized, and the installation and testing of the electromechanical equipment (dry test) are nearing completion. Once water is discharged from the tunnel, the wet testing of the equipment will commence.



All outstanding tasks are expected to be completed within one month, with the objective of initiating power generation.

The construction of the Middle Bhotekoshi project faced several challenges, including the Jure landslide, a significant earthquake, disputes along the Nepal-India border, flooding of the Bhotekoshi River, the impact of Covid-19, and subpar performance by contractors.

The projected cost of the project was initially estimated at Rs. 12 billion, excluding interest during the construction phase, at the time the loan agreement was established with the Employees' Provident Fund. The revised estimated cost of the project, also excluding interest for the construction period, is now Rs. 16 billion. The original total cost of the project was financed equally, with 50 percent sourced from equity and 50 percent from debt.

Among the founding shareholders, who collectively hold 51 percent of the company's issued capital, the distribution includes 10 percent from

the NEA, 37 percent from Chilime Jalvidyut Company Limited, and 1 percent each from Sindhupalchok Hydropower Co. Ltd., Nepal Arnico Hydropower Company Ltd., Sindhu Investment Company Pvt. Ltd., and Sindhu Bhotekoshi Hydropower Ltd.

The remaining 49 percent is held by ordinary shareholders, which includes 19.5 percent from employees of the Provident Fund, 3.5 percent from employees of the founding organizations, 1 percent from employees of the lending organizations, 10 percent from residents of Sindhupalchok, and 15 percent from the general public.

The company has successfully raised capital through the issuance of ordinary shares. The project is expected to produce 542 million units of electricity annually. The NEA will purchase electricity generated by the project during the winter and rainy seasons at rates of Rs. 8.40 and Rs. 4.80 per unit, respectively. The company anticipates an annual revenue of Rs. 2.08 billion.

# डेङ्गीका लक्षणहरू

डेङ्गीका लक्षणहरू:

- एककासी ज्वरो आउनु,
- ५-७ दिनसम्म ज्वरो रहनु,
- बेस्सरी टाउको दुख्नु,
- आँखाको गेडी दुख्नु,
- हाडजोर्नी, मांशपेसी र ढाड दुख्नु,
- शरीरमा विविरा आउनु,
- रिङ्गटा लाग्नु,
- वाक्वाकी लाग्नु, बान्ता हुनु,

यस्ता लक्षणहरू देखिएमा तत्काल स्वास्थ्यकर्मीसँग परामर्श गरौं ।



नेपाल सरकार  
विज्ञापन बोर्ड



# Korea Firmly Stands With Nepal



BY: PARK TAE-YOUNG

It is a great pleasure to invite you tonight to Nepal- Korea Infra Biz Night. We gather to celebrate and reinforce the deep and enduring partnership between Korea and Nepal. This year marks the 50th anniversary of our diplomatic relations. And it is indeed a milestone that reminds us of the strength and potential of our collaboration, particularly in the field of infrastructure development.

Korea has built infrastructures in Nepal including three hydropower plants, TIA airport, roads, hospitals, innovation hub-center and vocational training centers. We are on the way to build more like transmission lines and Cyber bureau with Nepal Police. Korea has focused on building up customized vocational training institutions for skilled human resources in five provinces.

Korea's energy and engineering companies have proudly contributed to a variety of landmark infrastructure projects here in Nepal. From hydro power plants like UT-1 and expressways like KTFT to renewable energy sources and vocational training centers, our Korean companies have played an essential role in advancing Nepal's development. These projects not only underscore the high technical expertise of Korea's companies but also their unwavering commitment to supporting the long-term growth of Nepal.

In our collaboration, financial support has also been a key enabler of progress. As a developing country with immense potential, we understand that access to financing is critical for continuing impressive growth trajectory.

Nepal has already benefited from the soft loan called EDCF (Economic Development Cooperation Fund) provided by Korean Government in Modi Khola and Charneliya hydro power plants. Korea remains fully committed to extending further financial support through similar soft loans. I believe there is much more we can achieve together.

Our companies, Equipped with world-class expertise, are ready and willing to take part in more projects and improve capacity-building initiatives in Nepal. With each successful project, we further solidify the trust and partnership that our two countries have built over the past five decades.

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of our diplomatic ties this year, Korea will remain to work together to further improve cooperation across various domains. Korea firmly stands

with Nepal to be a good partner preparing to graduate from the LDC status in 2026.

In conclusion, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to all of you here tonight for your dedication and hard work in fostering our strong partnership. Let us continue to work together to invest in our shared future, and to ensure that the next 50 years are as prosperous as the last.

*Park Taeyoung is the ambassador of Republic of Korea to Nepal. Excerpts of his statement delivered at Nepal-Korea Infra Biz Night 2024*







Designed by: S. B. Bhatta

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# Paris 2024 Games Were Much More Than Just A Sporting Event

*Paris 2024 Games Were Much More Than Just A Sporting Event; they were a symbol of innovation and creativity*



BY: VIRGINIE CORTEVAL

It is a great honour and pleasure to welcome you to the French Residence this evening. I am especially delighted to be your host as the Ambassador of France, returning to this beautiful country where I previously served as Deputy Chief of Mission from 2012 - 2015.

Tonight, we gather to celebrate an extraordinary milestone—Palesha Goverdhan's historic achievement in the Paralympic Games in Paris. On Friday, 30th August, in front of many spectators at Paris' Grand Palais, Palesha became the first athlete from Nepal to win a medal at the Paralympic Games. She made her country proud by securing the bronze medal in the women's Para Taekwondo, an achievement that not only inspires but will surely transform the future of Nepali sports. I take this opportunity to congratulate the support system that is behind your success as well: obviously your parents, your coach as well as the National Paralympic Committee, and the Nepal Taekwondo Association.



My colleague, Deputy chief of Mission - Elsa Calley, was at the airport to greet you when you returned and she informed me of the impressive welcome that you received.

Palesha, you are a beacon of hope and determination. Your journey reflects the audacity to dream and conquer challenges. You have revealed the immense talent of Nepali athletes to the world.

While we celebrate the incredible accomplishment of Palesha, I also want to acknowledge the efforts of all Nepali participants from the Summer Games 2024 as well as from the Paralympic Games. Their passion and determination were just as inspiring. This is only a beginning and we are bound to see Nepal shining bright in the international sporting platforms in the days ahead.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Paris 2024 Games were much more than just a sporting event; they were a symbol of innovation and creativity. From the breathtaking and audacious opening ceremony to hosting swimming events in Seine River, we dared to go beyond the ordinary. These Games reflected the French spirit, one that dares to explore unconventional paths, from the introduction of breakdancing as a new sport, to using historic monuments as backdrops for competition.

In this same spirit of innovation, we are thrilled to highlight the Choose France/ Marque France initiative tonight. As President Emmanuel Macron said, "The French spirit continues to astonish fascinate and change the world. Let's bring out this spirit, this ambition, this desire to combine excellence and freedom. Let's make it iconic".

Our aim is to foster a dynamic, inclusive France that encourages talents from around the globe to come and create. So, if you wish to make an impact, Choose France!

On 28th September, we will be hosting the Choose France Tour at the Alliance Française, where more than 15 renowned French educational institutions will participate. We invite ambitious Nepali students to join us and explore the many opportunities to study and innovate in France.

Together with Team France which includes Alliance Française and Ecole Française/the International French School, we strive to work towards further strengthening our relations.

*Virginie Corteval is the Resident Ambassador of the French Republic to Nepal. Excerpts of the statement delivered at a special event at the French Residence on September 16, celebrating Ms. Palesha Goverdhan, Nepal's first Paralympics medallist.*

## UDIPUR SUBSTATION

# Improve Quality Of Distribution

## Construction of 220 kV Udipur Substation Completed

By A CORRESPONDENT

Under the Masryangdi Corridor 220 kV transmission line project, the construction of a 220 kV substation has been completed at Udipur in Benisahar Municipality of Lamjung.

Udipur substation based on Gas Insulated Substation (GIS) technology has 220-132 kV, 160 MVA and 132-33 kV, 50 MVA power transformers.

The construction of the substation has been completed and all the equipment including the power transformer has been successfully tested. 132 kV substation has been brought into operation.

According to the electricity purchase and sale agreement between Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) and Himalayan Power Partner, the power of 27 MW Dordi Khola hydropower project is connected to this substation.

The Dordi Corridor 132 kV double circuit transmission line constructed for the electricity generated from Lamjung's Dordi and its tributaries will now be connected to this substation.

As the construction of Udipur substation seemed to take some time, the electricity coming from the Dordikhola hydropower and Dordi Corridor transmission line was bypassed to the Udipur substation and connected to the switchyard of Middle Marsyangdi power plant through an alternative arrangement.

As the construction of the substation has been completed, now the Dordi Corridor transmission line will be inserted into this substation and electricity will be transferred to the switchyard of Middle Marsyangdi. After that, electricity will flow to the national transmission system through Middle Marsyangdi-Masryangdi 132

kV transmission line.

Managing Director of the NEA Kulman Ghising said that since electricity will be supplied locally through the 33 kV line from Udipur substation, the electricity supply in that area will be reliable and trustworthy.

Managing Director Ghising said, "Under the project, the construction of 220 kV transmission line from Udipur via Tanahun's Markichoke to Chitwan's Bharatpur is being completed



by the end of April."

After the construction of this line, it will be more convenient for the electricity produced by the hydropower projects in that area, so the construction of this line has been given high priority and the work has been carried forward.

The Masryangdi Corridor 220 kV transmission line project has been started for the electricity generated from Masryangdi and its tributaries to flow into the national transmission system.

About 1,600 MW of electricity can be transmitted through the transmission line. Under the project, a 113 km double circuit transmission line from Bharatpur in Chitwan to Dharapani in Manang is under construction.

The project is being divided into three packages. Under the first package, about 67 km transmission line from Udipur to New Bharatpur substation is under construction.

Out of the 110 towers in the Udipur-Markichoke section of this package, 90 foundations have been laid. Out of 83 towers in Markichoke Bharatpur section, 35 towers on private land have been laid.

As the rest of the tower is located in the forest area, the project head Narayan Regmi said that they are going to start felling the trees after the completion of the whole to use the land of the forest area and remove the trees there.

Under the project, 69 hectares of national forest will be used and 10,225 trees will have to be cut for the construction of the transmission line from Udipur in Lamjung to New Bharatpur via Gorkha, Tanahun.

Under the second package, the construction of new Bharatpur and Udipur substations has been completed.

Under the third package, Manang (Dharapani)-Khudi-Udipur 46 km transmission line and two substations are under construction. Construction of 220÷132÷33 kV Khudi substation is almost 90 percent complete. 220÷132÷33 Manang substation is also under construction.

The foundations of 22 of the 46 towers in the Khudi-Udipur transmission line section have been laid. 6 towers have been erected.

The estimated cost of the project under construction is around 16 billion rupees with the investment of the Nepal government and the concessional loan of the European Investment Bank (EIB).



# १८ औं वर्षमा प्रवेश



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