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VIEWPOINT
Hanan Goder-Goldberger



OPINION
Hemant Arjyal

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FORTNIGHTLY



NEA
Kul Man Ghising, A Cool Man
INSIDE



BEEN
Honoring The Contribution



INTERVIEW
Bipin Adhikari



HELVETAS-NEPAL'S RIVERBED PROJECT
Bringing Three Tires Of Governments Together

HBL

साना तथा
मभौला
उद्यम कर्जा

व्यवसाय गर्न सिप र मेहेनत चाहिन्छ, पैसा हामी दिन्छौं

हिमालयन बैंकको
'साना तथा मभौला उद्यम कर्जा' सुविधा

१२ वर्ष सम्मको लागि १२ करोड सम्म

*शर्तहरू लागू हुनेछन् ।

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Notes From The Editor



Nepal is going through an energy transition, with a surplus of energy in the summer and a deficit in the winter. As Kul Man Ghising, Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), is in the driving seat. As he has already served for more than 7 years as the MD of the public sector entity that could not manage the load shedding of more than 12 hours, what will be the state of power supply after his second tenure is unpredictable. At a time when there is a huge gap of trust in the efficiency and capacity of the people working in the public sector given the past record, the common people fear the possibility of a return of load shedding. As a hardworking person with managerial skills, MD Ghising has established himself as an energy leader in the eyes of the public. Similarly, MD Ghising has successfully transformed Nepal from a net importer of hydropower to a net exporter earning around Rs.20 billion. MD Ghising has also created many critics including Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli and his party CPN-UML. Everyone has the right to like and dislike, but the question is what will happen to the present stage of energy transition in case of new MD in NEA. We have decided to cover the energy transition and the role of MD Kul Man Ghising, who also proved wrong a decade old narrative that India cannot buy Nepali electricity and these critics think it is just a myth to believe that Nepal can export electricity, is our cover story this issue.

Keshab Poudel

Editor

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Israel Tried Its Best To Engage In Peace Process

Memorial Ceremony On Hamas Massacre Of October Seventh



BY: HANAN GODER-GOLDBERGER

A year ago, on the seventh of October, Israel faced a murderous attack by Hamas terrorists. Lets remember what was there, prior to the attack, on the sixth of October: Israel completed its withdrawal from the entire Gaza strip, thousands of Israelis were uprooted from their homes, the border between Gaza and Egypt was open for trade and for passengers, thousands of workers from Gaza were working in Israel, food supply, electricity and water were entering from Israel into Gaza on daily basis.

This was not enough for Hamas leaders. They planned, armed and then carried this attack on civilians, on schools, on music festival audience, on any person, a Jew or an Arab that happened to be in that area.

Israel tried its best to engage in peace process: We handed territories, responsibilities and funds to our neighbors. All this goodwill was not appreciated. Instead of using the funds for development, it was used to arm their militias. Instead of building greenhouses they dug tunnels trying to bring them the ability to attack Israel, instead of teaching their children how to bring progress and prosperity they taught them how to hate.

Two hundred and fifty hostages were abducted by Hamas terrorists into Gaza, a hundred and one of them are still kept in dark dungeons there.

No phone calls, no letters, no medications, and no visit of the red cross since then. We have no information about them.

Israel will continue to negotiate for their release and for their safe return home to their families. At the same time, we will continue to search for them even if we will have to reach one building after another in Gaza.

During this year a new front was opened, from the north, from the Lebanese border. Again, in 2000 Israel withdrew to the international border from areas that were under our control in Southern Lebanon. And what came out from our

good intention? Rockets, Missiles, murderous invasions, 12 murdered children in drone attack and 80,000 Israelis that became refugees inside Israel. Secret refugees, we call them, because since they are in Israel, under the responsibility of the Israeli government they are never mentioned by all those that care for civilians.

Israel will know how to protect itself, to bring the hostages back and to allow our citizens to go back to their homes. We paid the price of our goodwill but now we will know what we have to do.



On the seventh of October, 17 Nepali students were stationed in Kibbutz Alumim in Israel. 17 graduates of agriculture from Sudurpaschim University that joined the “Learn and Earn” program in Israel. At 06:30 in the morning, when rockets and sirens started, they rushed into the shelter. We did not expect

that the terrorists will invade and come to murder them. 10 were murdered. only six survived. out of the six survivors four are in Israel studying and working. And the last one is still missing, Bipin Joshi, a hero who managed to save his friends by throwing the terrorist grenade away. He is still held in Gaza. Why? What for? This is the logic of terror that we are facing. When I say we, I mean Nepal and Israel and all democratic countries that share the values of tolerance and freedom, of Democracy and respect to someone that is different than ourselves.

Dear Nepali families, victims of Hamas attack: Your children came to Israel as our guests, after the seventh of October you became part of the Israeli family. In Nepal and in Israel, we will continue to take care of you because, family ties are the most important.

This week we mark the Israeli new year. Let me end with a wish that next year will be a successful one to all our Nepali and Israeli friends wherever they are located.

Goder is the ambassador of Israel to Nepal. Excerpt of his statement delivered in the Memorial Program.

NEWSNOTES

Monique Sokhan Takes Office As UNHCR's New Representative In Nepal

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is pleased to announce that Ms. Monique Sokhan has taken up her duties as the UNHCR Representative in Nepal, after presenting the letter of credence to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba, on 22 October 2024.



Upon taking up her new role, Sokhan said, “I am greatly honoured to serve as UNHCR Representative in Nepal. UNHCR and Nepal have a long history of close cooperation on refugee matters since the 1960’s. Over these years, in a spirit of humanity and compassion, we have worked together tirelessly to bring a better life for hundreds of thousands of people uprooted by conflict and persecution. The people of Nepal have set an exemplary tradition of hospitality, and of protecting refugees and finding solutions to their plight, despite many challenges. I am deeply committed to continue the constructive dialogue and collaboration with the Government of Nepal and all partners to solve outstanding issues pertaining to the wellbeing of refugees and other people with and for whom UNHCR works.”

A national of Cambodia and France, Sokhan arrives from UNHCR Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok, Thailand, after a successful tenure as the Regional Senior Protection Coordinator. Ms. Sokhan has worked on humanitarian and refugee issues for over 25 years, in Thailand, Cambodia, West Timor (Indonesia), Mongolia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sudan, Ivory Coast, Hong Kong, Ethiopia, Haiti, and Lebanon. She has also served at the Regional Bureau for Africa at UNHCR’s Headquarters in Geneva and the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia. Throughout her career with UNHCR, Sokhan has focused on protecting refugees and stateless people and finding durable solutions to forced displacement.

The Embassy Of The Republic of Korea In Nepal Hosted K-Culture

KUKKIWON Taekwondo Performance to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Diplomatic Relations between the Republic of Korea and Nepal on

(Thursday) October 17, 2024 at Nepal Academy Hall, Kamaladi, Kathmandu.

The year 2024 marks the 50 th anniversary of establishing diplomatic ties between Nepal and Korea. The KUKKIWON Taekwondo Demonstration Team has shown the essence of Korea’s national martial art and its advanced techniques and skills through Taekwondo demonstration performance since its foundation in 1974. The Team visited over 150 countries around the world to serve as a citizen diplomat promoting Korea’s Taekwondo and K-Culture.

As a pre-performance event on the same day, Korean Restaurant Association in Kathmandu organized the K-Food Stalls and Korean Traditional Play Experiences. The K-Pop dance performance was followed by the 2024 K-Pop winners in Nepal.

Ambassador of the Republic of Korea in Nepal Park Taeyoung highlights that the Embassy has been organizing various programs in cultural, economic and development areas to commemorate the 50 th anniversary of the diplomatic ties between two countries. He also expressed that through the mutual cooperation programs, the close ties will be further deepened and the bilateral relation between Nepal and Korea will reach a new height.

The event was attended by the Korean community in Kathmandu, journalists, high-level government officials, representatives from the diplomatic missions in Kathmandu, and other esteemed guests.

The Embassy of the Republic of Korea also organizes Ambassador Cup Taekwondo competition to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Diplomatic Relations between Republic of Korea (RoK) and Nepal. The



South Korean Ambassador Taekwondo Cup will kick-off tomorrow, Friday 18th October. Nepal Taekwondo Association is organizing the tournament at the International Sports Complex, Lalitpur. The South Korean KUKKIWON Demonstration team from Korea will stage a taekwondo show at the opening of the contest.

We Are Eagerly Waiting To See Bipin Joshi’s Safe

Release: FM Dr. Rana

Foreign Minister Dr. Rana drew the attention of the world community for the release of Bipin Joshi

Foreign Minister Dr. Arju Rana Deuba, who is currently in New York to participate in the United Nations General Assembly, has requested the world community to cooperate for the safe release of Nepali youth Bipin Joshi.



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Addressing the ministerial meeting of the Organization of Non-Aligned Nations in New York on Monday, Minister Dr. Rana drew the attention of the world community for Joshi's release.

She said that Nepal is anxiously waiting to welcome Bipin Joshi and requested the help of the world community for this.

Last October, 10 Nepalis were killed in a terrorist attack by the Hamas group in Israel. After that attack, Joshi was kidnapped by Hamas. Several other people were also killed in the violent attack.

Minister Dr. Rana said in the meeting that the Nepal government has been demanding the safe release of Joshi while condemning the attack.

She said that war, rebellion and acts of violence are still happening in many parts of the world under different names and pretexts, so the world has to take a collective initiative to end the murderous violence and establish peace.

She said, "I think that after the Second World War, conflicts have increased in many parts of the world." Therefore, we are standing at a very complicated point in history and we have to work with high priority to protect citizens from armed conflicts.

Minister Dr. Rana also said that even now the countries of the world have failed to stop such ongoing conflicts, to find solutions to the problems created by war and to maintain peace and freedom among the citizens.

PM Oli Calls Nepali Youths Living Abroad To Return Home

Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has urged the Nepali youths living abroad to return home and create employment opportunities.

Prime Minister Oli, who is leading a Nepali delegation to the 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, said this at the World Leaders Forum organized by Columbia University .

He clarified that the national aspiration of 'Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali' has been put forward to eradicate poverty and ensure the right of all to live with dignity.

Speaking as the keynote speaker at a dialogue on 'Nepal's Journey of Democracy and Economic Development', he said there is only the data of students and youths who have gone abroad from Nepal but not that of returnees.

Noting that the government has brought out programmes such as small scale industries and 'startups' for employment opportunities, PM Oli urged the youth to unite in nation-building as he was clear that the country could not transform without the youth.

"Nepal's economic situation is not very weak. On the contrary, I see a lot of potentials for its prosperity, which we will be able to achieve within a short time if we work hard", he said, adding,

"We are a rising democracy. We are also neighbours of economic powers like India and China. In that sense, Nepal is in a position to become a multi-dimensional economy for economic development".

Saying that he was leading a government with two major parliamentary parties that had played a decisive role in Nepal's democratic movement, PM Oli said he had a resolution to maintain good governance and transparency.



"We have no other intention but to make Nepalis prosperous and happy. We are fully committed to the journey of prosperity", the PM shared.

Addressing the 'Lead Free Future: Partnership Launch and Pledging Event' organized by USAID and UNICEF, PM Oli expressed solidarity with the lead-free campaign. He said that Nepal has already understood that the use of lead has affected the health of children.

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He clarified that Nepal has been implementing the policy of freeing lead from its use with the understanding that it has affected the health of children and recently brought a bill related to food security in the parliament.

US President Joe Biden's wife Dr Jill Biden, the President of Dominica, the President of Malawi, among others, also spoke on the occasion reports RSS

Foreign Minister Dr. Rana, Indonesian Counterpart Sign Bilateral Deals

On the sidelines of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly (U N G A) , Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba and her Indonesian counterpart Retno L.P. Marsudi,



signed two key agreements - the Bilateral Consultation Mechanism and the Visa Exemption Agreement for diplomatic and official/service passport holders.

The agreements aim to further strengthen bilateral ties, and enhance cooperation between the two countries, informed the Secretariat of FM Dr. Deuba in a statement.

The meeting between Dr. Deuba and Marsudi discussed a range of issues, including mutual bilateral interests between the two countries, as well as the expansion of future relations, development partnership, and cooperation to reduce the impact of climate change. Likewise, the leaders also discussed the mutual cooperation and investment between the two countries in tourism promotion. Foreign Minister Dr. Rana expressed the hope that the newly signed agreements would play an important role in further expanding the mutual relations between the two countries.

She held bilateral meetings with foreign ministers from various countries, including from Indonesia, Burundi and Finland, in New York on Sunday during her participation on the sidelines of the UNGA. Minister Dr. Rana had a talk with her Burundian counterpart Albert Shingiro. The two ministers discussed issues, including mutual relations and bilateral interests as well as potential future cooperation between the two countries, read the statement.

“The discussions between the two ministers also touched on identifying ways for cooperation to tackle the impacts of climate change, which the two landlocked countries are struggling with,” it said.

Likewise, Dr. Rana held talks with Finland's Minister of Foreign Trade and Development, Ville Tavio where the two leaders acknowledged over 50 years of strong and friendly relations and cooperation between Nepal and Finland. On the occasion, FM Dr. Rana appreciated Finland's continued support in Nepal's economic and social sectors. They also discussed mutual interests, future cooperation and potential partnership areas.

French Ambassador Corteval Paid A Courtesy Call On CoAS General Sigdel

French Ambassador to Nepal Virginie Corteval paid a courtesy call on Chief of Army Staff of Nepal Army (CoAS) General Ashokraj Sigdel at Nepal Army Headquarter.

Likewise, the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to Nepal Abdulla Saeed Mubarak Jarwan Al Shamsi paid a courtesy on CoAS General Sigdel.

In the meetings held in the office of the CoAS, matters of mutual interest and bilateral relations were discussed.

The Nepali Army believes that this kind of meeting will help in making the relations between Nepal more harmonious and stronger.



FAO Launches New Science And Innovation Network To Transform Agrifood Systems In Asia-Pacific

The transformation of sustainable agrifood systems requires a more coordinated response across multiple policy levels, particularly to ensure food security and livelihoods in the Asia-Pacific region, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) reported at the One Country One Product (OCOP) second regional organizing group meeting in China today.

Twenty-two countries in the region have identified twenty distinct Special Agricultural Products (SAPs),

some of which are less known than staples but have enormous potential. These products have not yet fully benefited from research and agricultural development programmes. However, they are important examples of agricultural products which contribute to ensuring food security and healthy diets and has a potential to be integrated into mainstream high-value domestic, regional, and international value chains and markets.



“By bringing science and innovation to the forefront, this new network will help countries maximize the value of their unique agricultural products,” said Jong-Jin Kim, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific. “We are creating pathways for inclusive growth, sustainable agriculture, and improved food security by developing SAPs that are culturally significant and ecologically adaptable.”

A focus on capacity building and knowledge sharing

The network is built on strategic partnerships with leading institutions, including the Institute of Geographical Sciences and Natural Resources Research (IGSNRR-CAS) at the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Nutrition at Mahidol University in Thailand, and other global research organizations. These collaborations will utilize advanced methodologies, such as the Geographical Indications, Environment, and Sustainability (GIES) approach, to ensure traceability of product origins, monitor environmental impacts, and enhance the nutritional value of SAP-based foods. Central to this initiative is FAO’s One Country One Product (OCOP) programme, which helps Member Countries identify SAPs and leverage their unique potential.

FAO’s strategic partnerships will continue to drive regional development priorities, ensuring that smallholder farmers, rural communities, and underrepresented groups are included in this transformation. The initiative aims to contribute more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems by promoting better production, enhanced processing, and improved market access.

FAO, in partnership with IGSNRR-CAS, is organizing an International Capacity Building Workshop on the GIES methodology for SAP development from 11-21 September 2024 in Beijing. Participants will engage in field visits and hands-on training to apply these innovative practices to their own agricultural sectors. They will also showcase their SAP products at the 2024 China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS), a global event co-organized by the Chinese Ministry of Commerce and the Government of Beijing.

This new network will contribute to the FAO Strategic Framework 2022–2031 and its goal of achieving “Four Betters”— better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life for all, leaving no one behind.

Nepal Hosts Second International Conference On Resilient And Inclusive Social Protection

The Government of Nepal National Planning Commission, in partnership with UNICEF and the World Bank, is organizing the second international conference on social protection in Kathmandu.

Inaugurated by Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Bishnu Paudel, the conference titled “Resilient and Inclusive Social Protection: Investing in Human Capital Development” aims to foster critical dialogue on how social protection can be leveraged to reduce poverty, build resilience, and invest in the human capital of future generations.

“This conference comes at a crucial time as Nepal is investing in its human capital,” said Minister Mr Paudel. “We are committed to building a more inclusive social protection system that serves the needs of all, especially our children and the future generations.”

Nepal is undergoing rapid economic, social, and demographic changes, with approximately 20 per cent of the population still living below the poverty line and significant inequality remaining a concern. Nepal’s Constitution guarantees the right to social security for vulnerable groups, but much of its investment in social protection has focused on the elderly, with limited attention to children and other vulnerable groups.

The Vice Chairperson of the National Planning Commission, Prof. Dr. Shivaraj Adhikari, stated that “The Government of Nepal, through the Sixteenth Plan, has given high priority to human capital development, and it is necessary to increase investment in children for this purpose.” He highlighted the fact that human development is both a means and an end in the context of the country’s development and emphasized that social

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protection plays a crucial role in building human capital.

Although the Government of Nepal has been increasing investment in social protection, the investment made in social protection has had only a limited impact on reducing poverty, building human capital, and promoting resilience against shocks and risks that may arise at various stages of the human life cycle.

“By investing in the early years, including through universal child grants, we can break intergenerational cycles of poverty that hold back future generations,” said Sanjay Wijesekera, Regional Director, UNICEF South Asia.



“Through this conference, we are not only reaffirm-

ing our commitment to the children and young people of Nepal, but we are also challenging ourselves to create a world where every child and young person, no matter his or her circumstances, has the opportunity to thrive and contribute to a brighter, more resilient future.”

The conference builds on the momentum of the 2019 International Conference on Social Protection, which promoted policy debate on strengthening social protection for children and the expansion of the child grant, establishment of an integrated registry, increased use of the cash plus approach, investment in productive employment and social security for the formal and informal sectors. This year’s conference provides a platform to reflect on key progress in Nepal since 2019 and for knowledge exchange, learning from best practices, and collaboration towards achieving SDG Target 1.3, which calls for implementing nationally appropriate social protection systems for all.

“In the face of economic challenges, global conflicts and climate change, adaptive social protection systems are more critical than ever,” said Ms Preeti Arora, World Bank Operations Manager for Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. “Effective social protection can buffer vulnerable populations, including women, youth, and children from crises while enabling them to invest in education, healthcare, and other essential services that enhance human capital and their productivity.”

The conference brings together senior representatives from the Government of Nepal, UNICEF, the World Bank, regional and global social protection experts, and key stakeholders from various sectors.

Dr Michael Samson, Director, Economic Policy Research Institute, delivered the conference keynote address on ‘Investment in social protection for human capital, inclusion and resilience – Global Perspective.’”

SAARC Material Transfer Agreement Meeting Opens In Kathmandu

A two-day policy round-table meeting on effective implementation of the Material Transfer Agreement (MTA) among SAARC Member States kicked off in Kathmandu on Wednesday.

SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) and IRRI South Asia Regional Centre (ISARC) have jointly organised the meeting.

The MTA was supposed to govern and facilitate the process of transferring seeds, planting materials and other promising biological materials among the SAARC Member States ensuring that the rights, responsibilities, and potential benefits are clearly defined for both the providers and the recipients of the materials.



The meeting holds particular significance as deliberations will focus on various aspects of the implementation of the MTA among the SAARC Member States including existing policy challenges and future pathways.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Development Ramnath Adhikari said that effective and expeditious implementation of the MTA is key to facilitating cross-border material exchanges, and promote innovation and invention in agricultural science. “South Asia is home to nearly a quarter of the global population and embodies cultural diversities, rich civilisational values, abundant natural resources and glorious history. Agriculture is a mainstay of economy, and livelihood of millions of people in the region,” he said.

However, it is very concerning that innovation and

transformation in the agro-food sector have not witnessed desirable progress in the region, he said.

“Material Transfer Agreement (MTA) provides a foundational basis for cooperation, collaboration and research among ourselves. This Agreement plays a crucial role in ensuring access for the researchers to essential resources and helping them transform their new ideas into useful innovations for communities and nations,” he said.

Recalling the SAARC Member States agreed to establish the SAARC Seed Bank in 2011 to address the pressing challenge of regional food security through a collaborative approach, he said that the core objective of this Seed Bank is to forge pragmatic cooperation among our fellow Member States to ensure easy accessibility and availability of quality seeds of major food crops in the region. The Material Transfer Agreement constitutes an important element of the SAARC Seed Bank.

There will be positive and far-reaching impacts on scientific progress, protection of intellectual property rights and ethical management of common means and resources, he said.

“On the flipside, these legal frameworks are not without challenges and problems. It is challenging for us to make these agreements just, fair and equally beneficial to meet the needs of all relevant stakeholders,” said Minister Adhikari.

He stressed on the policy to harmonise agreements, simplify processes, reduce administrative red-tape and address various needs of the stakeholders.

He said that discussion should be policy-focussed to protect intellectual property rights without creating impediments to mutual collaboration, strike a balance between the need of open access to information and the protection of confidential information and prioritizing ethical standards in maternal transfer process. “Our goal is to foster a collaborative environment in South Asia region where ideas and materials particularly in agricultural research and development can be exchanged freely, and actionable outcomes can be developed,” said Ganga Dutta Acharya, Senior Programme Specialist, SAARC Agriculture Centre, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The major objectives of the meeting are to sensitize the multiple stakeholders including high-level policy makers, researchers and seed/breed producers/distributors for better understanding about MTA processes and requirements, to discuss and work towards developing a clear mechanism for effective implementation of the

MTA in SAARC region and to work towards harmonizing the material transfer policies among SAARC Member States so as to enable a hassle-free cross-border transfer of genetic materials and to explore opportunities in public private partnerships in material transfer processes.

KOICA Nepal Photo Exhibition, Cultural Event

The Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) Nepal Office organised a two-day Photo Exhibition and Cultural Event on September 11 and 12 at the KOICA ICT Centre, Institute of Engineering (IOE) Pulchowk Campus.

According to a press release, KOICA informed that the event was held to mark the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Korea and Nepal, which began in 1974.

The two-day event featured engaging activities and exhibitions, focusing on KOICA’s development cooperation in Nepal,



under the theme of prosperity, happiness and humanity. The exhibition also hinted at some of the cultural aspects of Korea like food, traditional games, calligraphy and K-pop.

Tae Young Park, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Nepal, said that the cooperation programmes would further strengthen the close ties between Korea and Nepal, elevating the bilateral relationship to new heights.

Similarly, a K-Culture booth was set up, allowing visitors to experience authentic Korean culture through activities such as calligraphy, traditional Korean clothing (Hanbok), and traditional Korean games. One special highlight of the event was a K-POP performance by the winner of the 2024 K-POP World Festival.

Another important highlight of the event was the announcement of Winners of the KOICA Photo Contest. KOICA Nepal Office announced a photo contest with the theme “Prosperity, Happiness, and Humanity in Nepal,” focusing on development cooperation on July 22nd, 2024.

BUSINESS BRIEF

FNCCI President Dhakal's Commitment To Cooperate With Syangja's Oranges And Potential Tourism Promotion Programs

Chandra Prasad Dhakal, President of the Federation of Nepal Chamber of Commerce and Industry, has expressed his commitment to cooperate with possible plans and programs related to the promotion of oranges, coffee and tourism in Syangja.

In the program organized by the Syangja District Industry and Commerce Association, President Dhakal informed that an investment company worth 10 billion rupees has been established and has started work, and said that a positive message can also be spread through domestic investment.

He said, "The business partners of the district are looking for investment opportunities, if they are to be integrated, there will be no problem of Puji."

President Dhakal said, "Deposits in the bank are sufficient at this time, the interest rate has decreased a lot. At this time, the message should be spread that there is an investment opportunity in Nepal itself."

He informed that during this period of one and a half years, they have been conducting continuous campaigns inside and outside the country to promote investment and informed that the government has revised 8 laws to create an investment friendly environment.

Special Discount At 'Hard Rock Cafe' For Customers Of Nepal Investment Mega Bank Limited (NIMBL)

The customers of Nepal Investment Mega Bank Limited will get a special discount at 'Hard Rock Cafe'.

According to the agreement between Nepal Investment Mega Bank (NIMB) Limited and 'Hard Rock Cafe', Kathmandu, NIMB customers will be given 10% special discount on food and beverages (non-alcoholic).



To get the discount, the customer has to pay through NIMB Debit/Credit Card or NIMB Smart App (Mobile Banking).

The bank has been giving various discounts and facilities to customers to encourage payment using digital means. The details

of the discount are available on the official website of the bank: <https://www.nimb.com.np/personal-banking/offers>

Global IME, Prime Power Sign Credit Facility Agreement

Global IME Bank and Prime Power Limited have officially signed a credit facility agreement aimed at developing a solar power project. The agreement was signed by Bank CEO Surendra Raj Regmi and Prime Power Limited President Ashish Garg during a ceremony held in Kathmandu.



Under this agreement, Global IME Bank will invest in the 30-megawatt Kapilvastu Solar Power Project, located in the Kapilvastu district.

Garg said the company has already secured an agreement with the Nepal Electricity Authority for the sale of electricity generated by the project, which will be connected to the national grid via substations in Chanauta of Kapilvastu.

This project is recognized as one of the highest-capacity solar initiatives in Nepal. The Bank said that renewable and green energy production is one of its key areas of investment strategy.

FNCCI President Dhakal Honored

Chandra Prasad Dhakal, President of Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI), has been honored by Western Development Forum.

President Dhakal was honored for his remarkable contribution to the development of the country's economy and for being born in the western development region of Savik and succeeding in reaching such a high position as the president of the Federation of Nepalese Industry and Commerce, an umbrella organization of Nepali industrialists.



In addition, Dhakal, who is also the outgoing president of the platform, has been given the honor in recognition of his outstanding role in the institutional development of the platform, the platform said.

On the occasion, former Chief Justice Kalyanraj Shrestha conferred the honor on him in a ceremony held in the capital today.

Chief Secretary Ek Narayan Aryal, Chief of Army Staff Ashokraj Sigdel and other distinguished personalities were also honored in the program.

Even though Nepal has been transformed into a federal system of government, the platform established for the development

and promotion of the former western development region honors the successful personalities who were born in the western region of the country and reached high positions in the national life.

Nepal Investment Mega Bank Limited Received Visa International Award With “Excellence In New Payment Flows - Issuer”

Nepal Investment Mega Bank Limited (NIMB) has been awarded with “Excellence in New Payment Flows - Issuer” at the Leadership Conclave Nepal 2024 organized by Visa International.



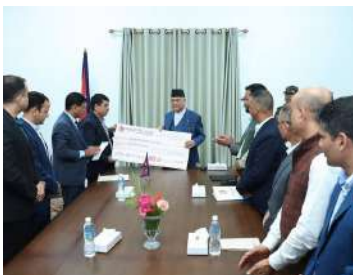
NIMB was honored at the ‘Visa Leadership Conclave Nepal 2024’ program held in Kathmandu. NIMB, which has been providing quality services to its customers for the past 4 decades, has promised to provide more services and facilities to its customers through modern digital means in the coming days.

Global IME Bank And IME Group Contribute NPR 50 Million To The Prime Minister’s Disaster Relief Fund

Global IME Bank, along with IME Group, has contributed NPR 50 million to the Prime Minister’s Disaster Relief Fund.

Chandra Prasad Dhakal, the Chairman of Global IME Bank and IME Group, handed over the cheque to Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli. A total of NPR 50 million was donated, which includes NPR 45 million from Global IME Bank Limited, NPR 2 million from IME Limited, NPR 1.5 million from IGI Prudential Insurance, and NPR 1.5 million from IME Life.

Chairman Dhakal stated that this assistance was provided in collaboration with the government to support the relief and rescue efforts for citizens affected by the natural disasters, such as floods, landslides, and inundations, across various parts of the country.



The cheque handover ceremony was attended by Hemraj Dhakal, Chairman of IME Limited and Managing Director of IME Group; Surendra Raj Regmi, CEO of

Global IME Bank; Yugesh Bhakta Bade Shrestha, CEO of IGI Prudential Insurance; Suman Pokharel, Deputy CEO of Global IME Bank; and Dinesh Amatya, Acting CEO of IME Life, among others.

Nepal’s Economy Is Showing Early Signs Of Recovery: IMF

Nepal’s economy is showing early signs of recovery, said an official of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), issuing a statement at the conclusion of a staff visit to Nepal.

An IMF staff team, led by Ms. Sarwat Jahan, conducted a staff visit to Kathmandu during September 11-22, 2024, to discuss recent macroeconomic developments and the implementation of the Extended Credit Facility (ECF)-supported programme.

According to Jahan, incoming high-frequency data shows import growth is entering into positive territory, tax collections are improving, and public investment is picking up. She said credit growth is recovering while remaining appropriately below nominal GDP growth while inflation continued to decelerate to around 3.6 percent by mid-July, partially reflecting favorable commodity prices and weak demand. International reserves continued to rise, underpinned by robust remittances, recovering tourism, and still subdued imports.

“Accelerating the reform momentum is critical to put the economy on a path towards sustainable, strong, and inclusive economic growth. This will require enhancing public investment execution, further strengthening of domestic revenue mobilization, and prompt disbursement of Child Grants,” she said, adding that as banks deal with elevated non-performing loans and capital constraints, continued vigilance is necessary, including by continuing to strengthen regulation and completing the loan portfolio review of the largest 10 banks.



Addressing vulnerabilities among the savings and credit cooperatives remains a priority. The recent amendments to the Anti-Money Laundering Act are a welcome step. Amending the Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) Act, completion of NRB’s external audit and increasing public enterprise’s transparency will enhance governance and accountability. The Investment Facilitation Act will bolster Nepal’s investment climate.

The IMF official said authorities’ ongoing efforts in meeting key commitments under the Fund-supported programme, with the support of IMF’s technical assistance, are welcome. Performance under the program will be formally assessed in the context of the fifth review of the programme.

“The IMF team held meetings with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Bishnu Prasad Paudel, the Nepal Rastra Bank Governor Maha Prasad Adhikari, the National Planning Commission Vice-Chairman Dr. Shiva Raj Adhikari, and other senior government and central bank officials.

The IMF team also met with representatives from the private sector and development partners. Ms. Duttagupta, Deputy Director in the IMF’s Asia and Pacific Department, attended key meetings reports RSS.

BUSINESS BRIEF

“The IMF team is grateful to the Nepali authorities for their warm hospitality and for constructive discussions.”

Global IME Bank and Austria’s University of Innsbruck signed A Cooperation Agreement To Promote Building Energy Efficiency In Nepal (BEEN) Project

An agreement has been concluded between the Global IME Bank and the University of Innsbruck in Austria under the Switch Asia Grant Program to promote energy efficient techniques and practices for the construction of sustainable housing buildings under the Building Energy Efficiency in

Nepal (BEEN) project.

With the financial support of the European Union, the project is led by the University of Innsbruck, Austria, in partnership with MinErgy Pvt. Ltd. (Nepal), Green Knowledge Solutions Pvt. Ltd. (India), and Asociación Española de Normalización (Spain).

The agreement was signed by Asim Karmacharya, Head of Green and Sustainable Banking of the Bank, and the representative of the University of Innsbruck and head of the project Dr. Daniel Nair.



Global IME Bank has been implementing “Green Home Loan” special loan scheme to promote sustainable housing. According to the bank, this agreement will help to enhance technical capacity and promote sustainable and energy efficient buildings.

Considering the convenience of its customers, the bank has been introducing various timely schemes to the customers.

Global IME Bank is honored as the best bank of Nepal in two categories under Euro Money Award for Excellence 2024. In addition, Global IME Bank has been honored in different categories by various renowned national and international institutions.

Global IME Bank is the first commercial bank in the private sector with branch network in all 77 districts of the country. The bank has 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.

Global IME Bank is a bank that provides banking services for all, which has been providing excellent services to all its customers through plans with various services and facilities.

Global IME Bank is a bank that provides banking services for all, which has been providing excellent services to all its customers through plans with various services and facilities.

Tourism Entrepreneur Mishra Passes Away

Tourism entrepreneur Basanta Raj Mishra has passed away. He was 72. Mishra had contracted dengue some days

back and was receiving treatment at Norvic Hospital.

His body would be kept at his residence in Kupandol, Lalitpur for two hours for paying tributes before being cremated at Pashupati Aryaghat today afternoon, according to family sources.

Chairperson of Temple Tiger Group, Mishra has contributed to the development of tourism sector in Nepal for more than five decades.

He is survived by his spouse and a son. (RSS)



President Dhakal’s Address At The Asian Trade Promotion Forum Calling For partnership In The Development Of The Creative Economy By Increasing Investment In Small And Medium Enterprises

Chandra Prasad Dhakal, President of the Federation of Nepalese Industries and Chamber and Commerce (FNC-CI), has called for increased investment and more concessions in the export market as small and medium enterprises are the backbone of the economy in developing countries like Nepal.

Addressing the event organized by the Asian Trade Promotion Forum ATPF in Bangkok, the capital of Thailand, President Dhakal also called for a common economic approach on the issue of Inclusive Prosperity: Empowerment of SMEs in the Asian Trade Economy.

In Nepal, since small and medium industries contribute about 22 percent of the GDP, President Dhakal mentioned the importance of intersectoral partnership in the development and promotion of the sector.



President Dhakal also drew the attention of Asian investors to the fact that the development and promotion of small and medium industries have been properly linked with the creative economy, and the possibilities of investment and market have increased.

President Dhakal also urged Nepal to contribute to inclusive prosperity by investing in cultural industries, as hand-woven carpets, thangkass, paintings and traditional musical instruments are a significant part of Nepal’s export trade.

President Dhakal also urged investors to visit Nepal and find investment opportunities as small and medium enterprises can be promoted through tourism.

President Dhakal drew the attention of investors for partnership as they are looking for investment in tourism infrastruc-

ture such as hotel, theme park, cable car targeting the growing tourism market.

President Dhakal said that India will purchase 10,000 megawatts of electricity from Nepal in the next 10 years, and since there is an additional market in Bangladesh, suitable opportunities have also been created for investment in hydropower.

President Dhakal also urged foreign investors to use the convenient opportunity as the bilateral investment agreement framework was passed to facilitate foreign investors, which has amended various laws related to doing business with the aim of improving the investment environment.

President Dhakal also informed that the FNCCI is ready to assist foreign investors who want to invest in Nepal and is helping foreign investors to understand the policies and procedures through the help desk.

EU-funded SUPER II To Build The Resilience Of Over 500,000 People In 3 Provinces

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Nepal, together with the Government of Nepal, UNICEF and UN Women, launched a new 2-year, USD 2.68 million (Euro 2.56 million) “SUPER II: Strengthening Urban Preparedness and Earthquake Response in Western region of Nepal” project, funded by the European Union (EU).



The project, under the overall coordination of UNDP, will build the resilience of over 500,000 people --including those from the marginalized communities, on earthquake preparedness and urban risks in Lumbini, Karnali and Sudurpaschim provinces of Nepal, as well as the three targeted municipalities, Nepalgunj Sub-Metropolitan City, Dhangadhi Sub-Metropolitan City, and Birendranagar Municipality.

“It is a priority for the European Union to continue being a part of the disaster preparedness and response activities in the western region of Nepal alongside UNDP, UNICEF and UNWOMEN”, said Veronique LORENZO, European Union Ambassador to Nepal.

“These activities will bring together communities and the authorities and help strengthen their capacity to prepare for and respond to disasters.”

Building on the past urban preparedness and earthquake response work implemented under the EU-supported SUPER-I (2021-24) initiative and drawing lessons from the earthquakes in Jajarkot and Bajhang districts, SUPER-II aims to strengthen provincial and municipal systems and reinforce their linkages with the federal disaster risk reduction and management system, thus contributing to a reduced risk at the community level.

“As we go forward, and in the true spirit of leaving no one behind, we are committed to include the most at-risk and marginalized populations at the centre of urban/disaster preparedness interventions. On behalf of the SUPER-II consortium, I would like to express my gratitude to the European Union for consolidating the preparedness achieved by the SUPER project and creating enabling environment for upscaling,” said Kyoko Yokosuka, the UNDP Resident Representative in Nepal.

In close coordination with the National Disaster Risk Reduction & Management Authority, provincial government and municipalities, the UNDP-led consortium project will engage parliamentarians, various associations of municipalities, government training institutions, NGOs/CBOs, media and the private sector.

The Basis Of Economic Reform Is Being Formed: Federation President Dhakal

Chandra Prasad Dhakal, President of the Federation of Nepal Chamber of Commerce and Industry, has said that the basis for economic reform in the country is being prepared.

He said this in a meeting with International Finance Corporation’s South Asia Regional Director Imad Fakhouri at the Federation Secretariat.

In the meeting, Dhakal informed that the government has accepted the suggestions given by the federation and has initiated new generation reforms.

Dhakal said that economic growth can be promoted by the government, private sector and international development partners joining hands.

He said that the two organizations can work together to improve business competitiveness in the local and international markets.

He also informed about the collaboration of the report titled ‘Situation of the Private Sector in Nepal’ jointly published by the Federation and the International Finance Corporation.

Dhakal informed that the report is important for the business community and policy makers.

Dhakal also said that Federation of Nepal Chamber of Commerce and Industry is working together with International Finance Corporation Nepal team to bring ECG program in the private sector.



In the meeting, Fakhouri said that there is a need to emphasize more on public-private partnerships. He said that although Nepal is facing some economic challenges, there are many opportunities for the country.

Nepal-Bangladesh-India Tripartite Agreement Is A Significant Milestone In Our Journey Towards Power Trading



BY: KUL MAN GHISING

It gives me immense pleasure to stand before you today on this momentous occasion - the signing ceremony of the Tripartite Power Purchase Agreement between Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam (NVVN) and Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB).

We are honoured by the presence of Honourable Ministers, Secretaries and senior delegates from Nepal, India and Bangladesh, as well as our valued development partners, all of whom play an important role in our shared mission of promoting regional energy cooperation. I extend a warm welcome to all of you gathered here for this historic ceremony.

Your gracious presence today underscores our shared commitment to advancing energy cooperation in South Asia, a vision that has united us in this endeavour.

Today marks a significant milestone in our journey towards electricity trade within the South Asian region. This agreement, which facilitates the sale of 40 MW of power from Nepal to Bangladesh through the Indian grid, is more than just a contractual arrangement; it is the culmination of our combined efforts, shared vision and unwavering determination. We are moving from bilateral power trade to a trilateral framework, opening up avenues for sub-regional and regional cooperation in the energy sector.

I would like to highlight some of the key points of the Tripartite Power Purchase Agreement.

NEA will supply 40 MW of power to the Mujaffarpur substation in India from 15 June to 15 November each year for a period of five years at 6.40 US cents per unit on a round-the-clock (RTC) basis through the Dhalkebar-Muzaffarpur 400 kV transmission line. BPDB will purchase this power from Bheramara in Ban-

gladesh through the Baharampur-Bheramara HVDC cross-border link.

NVVN will act as a trader for this transaction and will receive a trading margin from BPDB for the energy supplied by NEA at the delivery point. NVVN will also oversee all scheduling, dispatching and energy accounting related to this transaction. In addition, all transmission charges and losses from the entry point - Mujaffarpur to the exit point - Bheramara will be borne



by BPDB. A total of 144 million units of electricity will be sold to Bangladesh during the five months of each year, generating an estimated annual revenue of approximately USD 9.22 million for Nepal.

This tripartite agreement is in accordance with the Guidelines issued by the Government of India for Import/Export of Electricity, 2018 and the Procedure for Approval and Facilitation of Import/Export of Electricity by the Designated Authority of India, issued on 26 February 2021. The actual flow of electricity from Nepal to Bangladesh will take place after obtaining

the necessary approvals from the Designated Authority, Central Electricity Authority, Ministry of Power, India.

Nepal has become the first country to trade power on the Indian Energy Exchange market from 2021. Currently, Nepal exports around 900 MW to India through bilateral, day-ahead and real-time market segments and after this agreement, Nepal will be the first country to export power to a third country across the border.

Looking to the future, the Nepalese government aims to significantly expand its capacity to 28,500 MW by 2035, with plans to sell up to 10,000 MW to India and 5,000 MW to Bangladesh over the next decade.

Our geographical proximity gives us a unique opportunity to develop key transmission infrastructure

and strengthen our interconnections. Together, we can build high-voltage connections that will facilitate increased power flows and lead to a more integrated South Asian energy market.

Nepal's abundant hydropower potential not only supports the energy security of this sub-region, but also plays a critical role in our global efforts to reduce carbon emissions. This historic milestone will not only strengthen people-to-people links between our countries, but also promote the sharing of diverse and complementary energy resources, leading to economic prosperity for all.

The development of hydropower projects, especially dams, in a mountainous country like Nepal will not only bring energy benefits but also flood control, irrigation, navigation and tourism benefits to downstream

countries. Thus, integration of all types of renewable energy resources through a strong grid network will create a win-win proposition for all partner countries.

This agreement lays the groundwork for promoting a fair energy market in the region, encouraging joint investment in energy projects and unlocking numerous benefits for our countries. I urge all of us to prioritise confidence building and maintain an open dialogue between us to achieve a seamless flow of electricity across physical borders, paving the way for an integrated sub-regional and regional energy market.



We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the dynamic and visionary leaders, secretaries and diplomats of these sub-regional countries for their tireless efforts to achieve this milestone in cross-border energy trade.

We are also grateful to NVVN and

BPDB for being our trusted partners.

Furthermore, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to our development partners for their unwavering support in the development of Nepal's energy sector.

Once again, welcome to all our distinguished guests and thank you for honouring this ceremony with your gracious presence. Your support strengthens our commitment to energy security and regional cooperation.

Let us seize this opportunity for collaboration as we move forward together towards a prosperous and sustainable future for South Asia.

Kul Man Ghising is the Managing Director of the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA). This is an excerpt of the welcome statement delivered at the tripartite agreement signing ceremony.



NEA Kul Man Ghising, A Cool Man

For seven years, Kul Man Ghising has served as the Managing Director of the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), during which he has significantly revitalized Nepal's electricity sector, ensuring that electricity is both affordable and reliable. Under his leadership, the NEA has successfully eliminated long-standing load shedding issues and has made substantial advancements in the generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity across the nation over the past eight years. One of his most notable accomplishments is transforming Nepal from a net importer of electricity to a net exporter, achieving an annual profit of Rs. 12 billion. Despite facing provocations, character attacks, and pressures from both known and unknown adversaries, MD Ghising has consistently demonstrated composure and professionalism. In a recent press conference attended by 300 journalists and broadcast live with over 200 cameras, he exemplified humility and respect, expressing gratitude to Prime Ministers, Ministers, senior officials, and his entire NEA team for their collective achievements. As the NEA commemorates its 39th anniversary on August 17, MD Ghising, who has turned a loss of Rs. 34.61 billion into a cumulative profit of Rs. 47.41 billion last year, continues to embody the qualities of a distinguished leader in a challenging environment

By A CORRESPONDENT

The Greek philosopher Plato posited that a man requires seven years of silent inquiry to uncover the truth, and an additional fourteen years to learn how to communicate that truth to others. This principle is exemplified in the career of MD Ghising.

Through extensive silent contemplation and inquiry, MD Ghising has acquired invaluable insights that have significantly transformed the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) and the electricity sector in Nepal. Under his strong leadership, the NEA team has achieved remarkable and visible

improvements.

Having successfully ended a decade-long period of load shedding, Ghising, a Tamang lad from the remote hilly region of Ramechhap, has emerged as a prominent figure in the nation.

He has also altered the prevailing



narrative that India would not purchase electricity generated in Nepal, successfully exporting substantial amounts of electricity to India.

Amidst widespread dissatisfaction with the existing state of affairs and the inefficiencies in service delivery, particularly among the youth, MD Ghising has garnered admiration for his tangible contributions in providing uninterrupted electricity to households. His efforts have endeared him to the general populace.

The significant presence of media representatives at a recent press conference underscored his popularity. Nevertheless, some critics, including the Prime Minister, business leaders, and experts, have accused the media of excessively glorifying Ghising for what they perceive as his routine responsibilities.

There is an increasing public sympathy for MD Ghising, stemming from the unwarranted criticism, personal attacks, and harassment directed at him regarding the disputes over dedicated feeders and trunk line billing, which have been fueled by high-ranking government officials, certain business leaders, and some members of the Public Accounts Committee.

The attempts by top government leaders to undermine a well-regarded

figure may inadvertently bolster those seeking to disrupt the political landscape. Recently, Nepali Congress leader Dr. Shekhar Koirala expressed concerns in a public gathering that, given the current circumstances, Nepal may experience political turmoil similar to that of Bangladesh.

MD Ghising has been subjected to relentless attacks from the ruling CPN-UML party-led Public Accounts Committee, as well as from former Deputy Inspector General of Nepal Police Ramesh Khrel, who positions himself as an anti-corruption advocate, and from business groups that have refused to remit revenue to the NEA for services rendered through dedicated feeder lines, alongside some

retired NEA officials and a segment of urban elites.

Nevertheless, MD Ghising enjoys considerable popularity among the general populace. With over 500,000 fan clubs on Facebook and widespread support for his efforts to eliminate decades of load shedding in Nepal, any inflammatory comments made by Ghising could escalate the situation from calm to chaotic.

Minister Khadka On NEA's Progress

Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation Minister Deepak Khadka has said that it is necessary to develop the energy sector in the country with the mutual support of the government and the private sector.

On the occasion of the 39th anniversary of Nepal Electricity Authority on Saturday, Minister Khadka said that it is necessary to make the country prosperous by developing the energy sector through mutual cooperation and coordination between the government and private sectors by making maximum use of the water resources available throughout the country.

He informed that Nepal's total power generation capacity has reached 3,200 megawatts and in the last financial year only about 463 megawatts were added to the national grid.

Minister Khadka said that it is necessary for the related agencies to work more effectively to achieve the goal of producing 28,000 megawatts of electricity by 2035.



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Minister Khadka said that if the target set by the government can be fulfilled, sufficient energy consumption can be increased in the country, industrialization will be developed and sufficient employment will be created, and the opportunity to earn foreign currency in sufficient amount from domestic energy export will be available.

“Although Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) has been making good progress in the field of electricity generation, transmission and distribution in recent times, it is seen that the authority has to work responsibly to provide regular and quality electricity service to the common consumers and provide services to the people quickly without any hassle,” Minister Khadka said.

Transitioning from a state of loss to achieving profitability

The Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), which experienced financial losses until the fiscal year 072/73, has achieved consistent profitability under the guidance of Managing Director Ghising. The current electricity leakage rate, previously at 25.78%, has been significantly reduced to 12.73%. This improvement alone has resulted in an additional annual revenue of approximately Rs. 12 billion for the NEA.

Despite the government’s increasing ‘unnecessary’ pressure on MD Ghising regarding the dispute over the dedicated feeder and trunk line premium tariff, Ghising has successfully transformed the fully government-owned authority into a model of profitability.

MD Ghising stated that since his initial appointment, the NEA has turned a

profit by minimizing both technical and non-technical electricity losses, expanding customer access, lowering financial expenditures, enhancing revenue, and improving institutional governance to facilitate the expansion of transmission and distribution networks and substations.

The financial outlook for the Nepal Electricity Authority, established on 1 Bhadrat 2042 under complete government ownership, was bleak until the fiscal year 072/73. During that year, the NEA recorded a loss of 8.89 billion rupees, with accumulated losses reaching 34.61 billion rupees by 2073, compounded by prolonged load shedding issues.

Concurrently, Ghising was appointed as the Managing Director of the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) for the first time on Bhadra, 073. The following year, the NEA reported a profit of 1.5 billion rupees. In the same year, on the day of Lakshmi Puja in October, domestic load shedding was eliminated.



The accumulated loss was reduced to 28.42 billion rupees. Since that time, the NEA has consistently generated profits. From the fiscal years 073/74 to 080/81, the authority achieved a total profit of 74.41 billion rupees, with

profits of 1.5 billion in 073/74, 2.98 billion in 074/75, 9.84 billion in 075/76, 13.37 billion in 076/77, 6.27 billion in 077/78, 15.6 billion in 078/79, 12.8 billion in 079/80, and 13.31 billion in 080/81. The accumulated profit of the NEA has reached 47.41 billion rupees as of last year.

In the fiscal year 072/73, the NEA’s reserves were at a loss of 34.61 billion rupees, which decreased to 28.42 billion in FY 073/74, 25.30 billion in FY 074/75, and 12.18 billion in FY 075/76.

In the fiscal year 076/77, the authority recorded a surplus of 4.49 billion rupees. This surplus increased to 11.60 billion rupees in 077/78, 24.77 billion rupees in 078/79, 33.64 billion rupees in 079/80, and reached 47.41 billion rupees in 080/81. Recently, the financial health of the authority has shown significant improvement.

Surplus Electricity

In terms of surplus electricity, load shedding in the industrial sector was eliminated as of 31 Baisakh 075. Furthermore, since October 078, electricity has been commercially exported to India, marking Nepal’s transition to a net exporter of electricity over the past year. The authority appears to be strengthening not only its financial position but also its operational performance and management through the development of various infrastructures.

From 27th January 077 to August 078, Hitendradev Shakya served as the Managing Director of the Authority. Following the completion of his initial term, Ghising, who departed in

Bhadra 2077, was reappointed on 25th Sharwan 078, with his tenure extending until Sharwan 082. During this period, Ghising has played a pivotal role in enhancing the profitability and organization of the NEA. In a press conference held on Friday, 2 August, MD Ghising emphasized his commitment to making the authority financially viable.

The assessment conducted by ICRA Nepal has affirmed the robust financial status of the authority. In its credit rating evaluations, ICRA Nepal has consistently awarded the authority a 'Double A Plus' rating, indicating its strong capacity to meet financial and economic commitments reliably.

The Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) is planning to offer 10 percent of its shares to the general public, following the establishment of a paid-up capital amounting to three billion. As of June 073, NEA's total assets were valued at 211 billion rupees, which has grown to 632 billion rupees by the end of the previous year.

The authority has undertaken a comprehensive asset valuation with the assistance of an international consultant, which suggests that its asset value is expected to rise further. Managing Director Ghising of NEA stated that, despite a decrease in electricity tariffs, the organization has successfully maintained profitability.

Recently, there have been three instances of a 25% reduction in electricity tariffs; however, profits continue to rise. Approximately 2.2 million customers are receiving free electricity, with a nominal charge of Rs 30, as stated by the official.

To promote the use of electric vehicles, concessional tariff rates have been sustained at charging stations. This approach demonstrates the authority's commitment to fulfilling its social responsibilities while also pursuing profit. Ghising asserted that the profits of the NEA are not merely theoretical.

These profits have been validated by various government entities, including the Auditor General, and are not just figures fabricated by the NEA.

He emphasized that the profits generated by the authority represent more than mere numerical data; they have become a dependable source for investing in the development of electricity infrastructure and expanding services, which will ultimately lead to increased profits in the future.



Presently, the energy sector is regarded as a vital foundation for the economic development of Nepal. A bilateral agreement has been established to export 10,000 megawatts of electricity to India over the next decade.

Ghising scores 99 percent in performance

The Ministry of Energy has awarded Ghising a performance evaluation score of 98.94 percent. A performance agreement was established between the ministry and myself, incorporating

various indicators related to the reform of the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA). In the assessment, scores of 94.23 percent and 98.94 percent were achieved for the fiscal years 078/79 and 079/80, respectively. The evaluation for the year 080/81 is currently underway, he stated.

Enhancing Electrification

In the fiscal year 072/73, the country's electrification rate stood at only 58%, whereas it had improved to 89.7% three years ago. Presently, the electrification status has reached an impressive 99%. Eight years prior, the number of electricity consumers was 2.97 million, and it has now grown to 5.93 million, including community connections. MD Ghising indicated that the nation will soon be officially recognized as fully electrified.

Significant Accomplishments

Eight years ago, the annual electricity consumption was recorded at three billion and 72 million units. This figure has now escalated to 10 billion and 23 million units. Per capita energy consumption has risen from 131 units to 400 units.

Over the past eight years, the electricity tariff has been reduced three times, amounting to a decrease of approximately 25%. Notably, despite these reductions, profits have continued to rise.

Increasing the Reach

Among a total of 5,090,000 customers, approximately 2,020,000 have received free energy by adhering to a minimum charge of only Rs 30. For agricultural purposes, electricity is provided at a rate of two rupees per unit, and there are no demand charges for the extraction of drinking water, along with concessions on energy costs.

The credit rating agency ICRA Nepal has consistently awarded the

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Electricity Authority a ‘Double A Plus’ rating, indicating the authority’s capability to meet its financial obligations with assurance. Over the past eight years, the authority has invested nearly one billion in capital and has allocated more than 56.68 billion to its subsidiaries and affiliated companies.

Net Profit

The NEA emphasizes that its profits are not merely theoretical but serve as a foundation for internal investments. Additionally, the volume of electricity exports has been on the rise each year, with Nepal officially commencing exports in November 2021. By the end of the last financial year, the Authority had exported 1.94 billion units of electricity, generating revenue of 17.7 billion. During the monsoon season, daily exports exceed 700 megawatts.

The authority reported that last year, 1.91 billion units of electricity were imported from India due to decreased production during the dry season. Nevertheless, exports exceeded imports by approximately 13 million rupees during the same period. Since the fiscal year 080/81, Nepal has transitioned from being a net importer to a net exporter of electricity. Plans are underway to commence electricity exports to Bangladesh this year.

Expansion of Transmission

Regarding the transmission infrastructure, Nepal’s national grid, which previously operated on 132 kV transmission lines, has now upgraded to 400 kV and 220 kV systems. The

length of the transmission lines has expanded from 2,900 circuit kilometers eight years ago to 6,500 circuit kilometers today. The Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) has stated that the transmission network, which is designed to facilitate the export of 20,000 megawatts of electricity, will be further developed by 2035. The total connected electricity capacity has reached 3,157 MW, with 2,300 megawatts added in the past eight years and 1,706 megawatts in the last three years. Hydropower remains the dominant source, contributing 2,991 MW to the installed capacity.

On Dedicated Feeder

During periods of load shedding, we have requested a premium tariff from industrial users based on their electricity consumption via dedicated feeders and trunk lines.

For instance, if an industrialist utilizes 1000 units of electricity within a month, they have already settled the standard charges associated with that consumption.

“We have now issued a discount bill reflecting the premium fee for the same 1000 units of electricity. Based on substantial evidence, we have provided exemption bills for the premium charges to industries utilizing dedicated feeders and trunk lines, as we possess records of their electricity usage during that period,” said MD Ghising.

Previously, we have presented this evidence to relevant authorities, including the court, and submitted

it to the Public Account Committee. Should an industrialist request proof through media channels, we maintain that there is no intention to disseminate such evidence publicly.

“The customer is responsible for paying the fee through small monthly installments. The same regulations will apply across the industry. We have already provided the necessary documentation to the appropriate authorities. The industrialists expressed their dissatisfaction with the bill and subsequently pursued legal action. During the court proceedings, we presented evidence from Chang and Chang. The court ruled in favor of the authority, affirming the accuracy of the bill issued,” said MD Ghising.

Significant achievements are accomplished not through sheer force, but through steadfast determination. Those who maintain an active pace for three hours each day will, over the course of seven years, cover a distance equivalent to the Earth’s circumference, as noted by the English philosopher Samuel Johnson.

Through relentless effort from dawn until dusk, MD Ghising has transformed a previously unprofitable public utility into a reliable and profitable power provider. As the NEA commemorates its 39th anniversary, MD Ghising has established NEA as a robust institution, effectively managing challenges with a composed demeanor in a demanding role.

साईबर अपराधबाट बचाऔं

ईन्टरनेट प्रयोग गर्दा:

- बलियो पासवर्ड राखौं र पासवर्डलाई समय-समयमा परिवर्तन गरौं,
- अपरिचित व्यक्ति वा कार्यालयबाट आएका शंकास्पद मेल, म्यासेज, लिङ्क नखोलौं,
- सामाजिक सञ्जालमा आएका शंकास्पद भिडियो वा अडियो कल नउठाऔं, यस्ता कल पटक-पटक आए ब्लक गरौं,
- आफ्ना ब्यक्तिगत विवरणहरू ओटिपी, युजरनेम, पासवर्ड, बैंक खाता नम्बर, पिनकोड, नागरिकता नम्बर, राहदानी नम्बर, जन्ममिति आदि कसैलाई शेयर नगरौं, सुरक्षित राखौं,
- अनावश्यक सफ्टवेयरहरू ईन्स्टल नगरौं, गरेको भए हटाऔं,
- सामाजिक सञ्जाल, ईमेल वा अन्य कुनै वेब एप्लिकेसन प्रयोग गरिसकेपछि साइन आउट गरौं,
- डिजिटल डिभाईसहरू मर्मत गर्न दिदा सम्पूर्ण विवरणहरू हटाएर मात्र दिऔं,
- सामाजिक सञ्जालमा अनावश्यक फोटो तथा ब्यक्तिगत विवरणहरू नराखौं,



नेपाल सरकार
विज्ञापन बोर्ड

Not Just Deadline Overrun



BY: HEMANT ARJYAL

There is never a dull day in aviation and not all with sad endings as we generally dread. There may be some minor incidents happening at some airports right now, like a service vehicle hitting the engine cowl of a jet, a soft collusion between jets with wing tip of one tearing off the horizontal stabilizer of another or a fuel tanker getting stuck under the wings and occasional big and small tail strikes. Even minor aircraft repairs costs a fortune. Just about a week ago there was a serious incident involving an Ariana jet throwing a dust storm as the B737 overran runway at Khost (KHT) as its rear rubbed against the terrain. Thankfully, it still managed to get airborne even after tearing the perimeter fence. A month ago a Brazilian airline had a rather long tail strike that indented the runway at Milan by over 700m. A day earlier two Saudi B777s has soft collision during pushback at Riyadh damaging nose of one and tail of another. It would have been much cheaper to employ wing walkers during pushbacks in crowded space than bear aircraft groundings topped by expensive repairs.

But it was, by far, more humiliating to learn about Nepali ground technician trying locally available “super glue” on having inadvertently tinkered with a perfectly function hydraulic line of an A320. Personally, I am skeptical about the given details. But, we can very well imagine the panic that must have set in, making the person act in the way he did. Further, this act exposes an extreme laxity on the part of the aircraft repair team for not being (1) careful enough to identify the line that needed maintenance and (2) not following

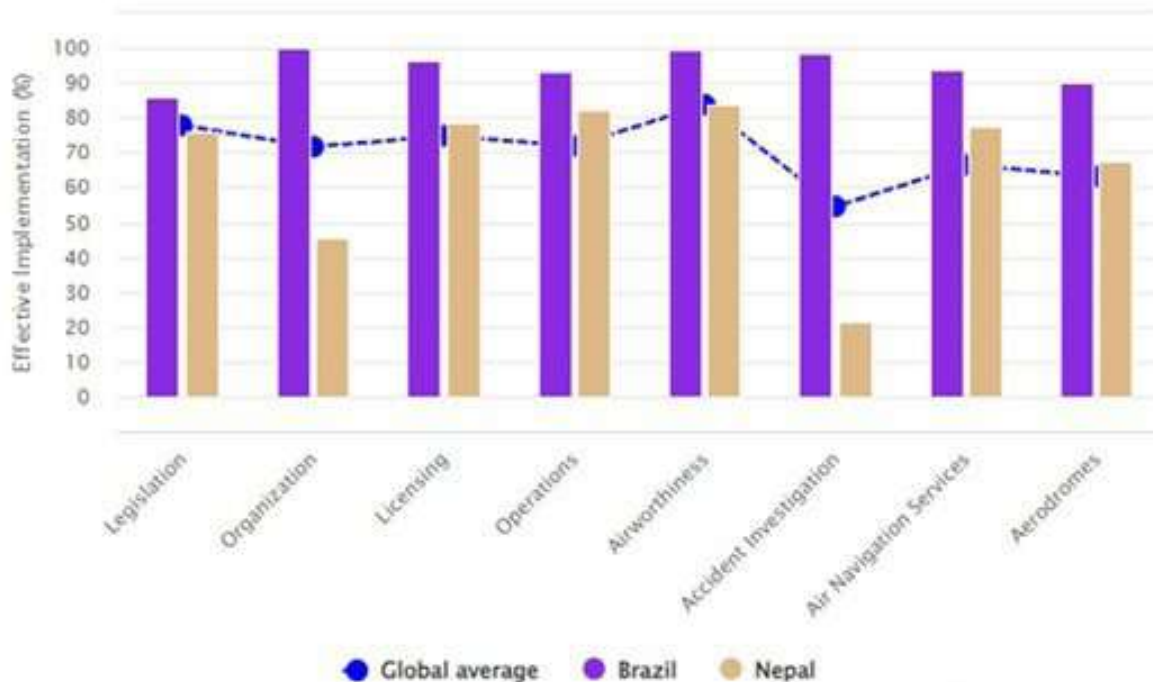
proper repair procedures as laid. Earning such blemish is a disgrace that Nepal aviation could do without.

We do not know what the Afghan authorities did, but the Italy’s civil aviation safety investigation authority has released its preliminary report on the B777 tail strike incident. The investigation has since determined that ‘pilots made a critical error when inputting data into the on board computer which led the plane’s



computer to calculate an incorrect take off speed, significantly lower than what was necessary leading to tail strike. Such reports are issued within thirty days following the incident, but in our case, here, neither the Saury’s crash investigating team nor CAAN, for that matter, has uttered a word about it as the deadline overran. So much for claims of taking safety in aviation very “seriously”!

Strangely, citing anonymous investigating team source Bizmandu.com had a story on 11 August claiming that “unsecured” maintenance kits (probably implying heavy load of tools) as having caused the imbalanced. Ascertaining the center of gravity (CG) of a loaded aircraft is a critical aspect, and it is more so when not fully loaded. Normally, a loadmaster does



the planning of the correct placement of the load on the airplane and ensures that cargos are secured firmly. The final load distribution sheet of the aircraft is presented to the captain for approval by ensuring it is loaded within its safe CG limits. But we would not know if the story was accurate enough as there was no follow up story beyond the “probable” leak.

While the initial assumption was about thrust imbalance arising out of a failed engine as the possible reason. But with hindsight, an aircraft with engines mounted at the rear, closer to body, then hung under wings, the resulting imbalance would be comparatively less. It is so, because of reduced distance (lever arm) between the source of thrust (engines) and aircraft CG. But again, we need to await the release of the official version to know what did exactly happen.

In my previous piece (The rot overhead) I had dealt about Yeti’s Pokhra crash and an extremely casual manner the upgradation flight was executed. Following which someone mailed me a copy of EASA team’s report of 11-15 September 2023 follow up visit. Besides mentioning other drawbacks, it also highlighted one related to “CAAN’s current practices in personnel licensing requirements and flight examiner systems. It showed non-compliance with international safety standards, especially as regards examiner designations in the area of flight crew licensing.

It further suggested that the need for CAAN to establish clear criteria, privileges, and effective surveillance mechanisms for Designated Check Pilots and examiners. Implementing these measures will significantly enhance the safety and competency standards across the aviation sector in Nepal, ensuring a more consistent and reliable oversight of aviation professionals. Sadly, given the above observation, it is not surprising that the Pokhara crash happened the way it did.

Lastly, CAAN boasts about Nepal having attained a better average in ICAO/USOAP (Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme). Just compare the graph relating to “accident investigation” (6th col) against “effective implementation” and we see Brazil’s stood at colossal 98.5% (2023) and despite that it had an ATR crash with 62 fatalities this August. And Nepal with a dismal 21.69% (2022) starkly reveals where the problem lies. May be it is just a joke that describes how a statistician who calculated that the “average depth” of all the rivers of the world was just 1.20m. He then confidentially stepped into a river and drowned! Wonder if CAAN is not heading the same way by trumping up the “average” agenda?

There is no way forward without sealing the gaping hole in the rickety boat with which we are making an attempt to cross the unforgiving ocean. Making a clean break and creating an exclusive and permanent aviation regulatory body is the only answer.

Electoral Reforms Are Essential Not Only For Effective Federalism But Also For Ensuring Equal And Quality Representation: Bipin Adhikari

Nepal is celebrating the ninth anniversary of its 2015 Constitution, a landmark document adopted through an elected Constituent Assembly that introduced federalism, devolution of power, and inclusive democracy. On this occasion, NEW SPOTLIGHT spoke with Professor Bipin Adhikari, a senior constitutional expert from Kathmandu University School of Law, about the Constitution's achievements, challenges, and its implementation over the years. Here are excerpts from the interview:

As Nepal marks the ninth anniversary of its Constitution, are there significant achievements that stand out?

The Constitution has indeed brought several notable achievements. Firstly, it has established peace in Nepal, with efforts to consolidate this peace ongoing. Federalism and devolution of power have empowered provinces and local governments, bringing governance closer to the people and fostering regional development. The system of proportional representation and inclusivity continues to ensure that marginalized groups such as women, Dalits, Madhesi, and indigenous communities are represented, enhancing the political participation of historically excluded communities.

The Constitution also strengthens guarantees for rights to education, healthcare, and employment, contributing positively to the human rights landscape. Moreover, its focus on social justice and redistributive policies has spurred initiatives in education, health, and employment for the underprivileged. Overall, the Constitution is evolving into a stabilizing force.

Some critics argue that challenges outweigh these achievements. Do you agree?

While the achievements are significant, challenges persist. Implementing constitutional frameworks requires adherence to the norms, standards, procedures, and institutions prescribed by the Constitution. Stability in government is crucial, as is addressing poverty and protecting agriculture from indiscriminate imports. There is also a need to prioritize employment for Nepali citizens and empower them in business and trade. These challenges underscore the necessity for stronger institutional support, political will, and improved governance to fully realize the Constitution's vision.

How is federalism being implemented under the Constitution?

Effective implementation of federalism requires

robust political will from both the ruling elite and the bureaucracy. Efforts should be made to clarify the roles and responsibilities of federal, provincial, and local governments to avoid overlapping authority and enhance efficiency. Adjustments in resource and revenue allocation between these levels of government may be needed to ensure equitable development. Institutional mechanisms for coordination between different government levels should be strengthened to improve cooperation and policy implementation. Provinces must be supported in managing law and order, health, education, and forest management as envisioned by the Constitution, with an emphasis on rapid establishment of provincial civil administration.

Can federalism be sustained without electoral reforms?

Electoral reforms are essential not only for effective federalism but also for ensuring equal and quality representation. Proportional representation must be further consolidated, and laws should focus on better representation and protection of marginalized groups. The first-past-the-post system also needs to be effectively implemented. Continuous refinement of the electoral system, including strengthening rules around election funding and candidate accountability, is necessary to enhance the integrity of the electoral process.

What is your assessment of inclusion in general?

Inclusion has shown some positive effects in public administration, but more effort is needed. In appointments, such as those made by the Constitutional Council, there is often a lack of necessary qualifications, leadership and inclusion. The appointment process sometimes favors politically charged individuals, undermining the constitutional logic of inclusion. The minimum qualifications required have become the maximum in the recommendation and appointment processes, which is problematic.

Some argue that certain laws are still lacking, and the

government needs to enact them to fully implement the Constitution?

This is true. For example, the federal government needs to introduce a new law to operationalize Article 56(5) of the Constitution, which allows for the establishment of autonomous regions. Similarly, there is no law yet to implement Article 42(1) of the Constitution, which guarantees specific groups in Nepal the right to proportional inclusion in state structures. These provisions are particularly important for identity-based groups, and without the necessary laws, their full potential remains unrealized.



Has the judiciary been effective in its role?

The judiciary has generally upheld constitutional supremacy and the rule of law, playing a vital role in safeguarding Nepal's constitutional framework. However, it has faced criticisms regarding its slow pace in handling disputes, difficulties in the enforcement of judgments, and occasional accusations of politicization. These challenges, though significant, have not undermined the judiciary's overall commitment to maintaining justice and protecting constitutional values. However, the role of Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court as the federal judicial dispute resolution mechanism has become cumbersome. There may be a need to either designate the entire Supreme Court as a constitutional court or establish a separate constitutional court to handle federal disputes, potentially under the chief justice's leadership. Additionally, amending the Constitution to involve District and High Courts in handling some federal disputes could also be considered.

The current coalition government has plans for constitutional amendments. What areas do you think require amendment?

Grievances from those who opposed the 2015 Constitution continue to influence political discourse, particularly regarding federalism, inclusion, representation, and perceived centralization of power. Concerns include the delineation of provincial boundaries, the creation of provinces that better reflect ethnic and cultural identities, and the uneven implementation of federal provisions. Constitutions often balance ideal governance visions with practical constraints, and while many groups seek full implementation of their visions, practical realities sometimes intervene.

There are extreme positions, with monarchists on one side and identity-based groups on the other, as well as secularists and proponents of a pro-Hindu state. Is reconciliation between these opposing views possible?

Achieving reconciliation between these opposing groups—whether monarchists and identity-based federalists, or secularists and pro-Hindu state advocates—poses a significant challenge. These factions represent fundamentally different visions for Nepal's political structure and governance. While full agreement may be difficult to attain, there are potential pathways to manage these conflicts and work toward a more inclusive political environment. The challenge lies in creating a framework that respects diverse identities and aspirations while maintaining national unity and stability.

How can constitutional satisfaction be ensured in such a diverse society?

Complete satisfaction for everyone is unlikely in a diverse society with conflicting interests. However, the goal should be to ensure that all voices are engaged, heard, and respected in governance, that grievances are addressed through continuous dialogue and reform mechanisms, and that the system remains inclusive and adaptable to future changes. This requires a commitment to open dialogue, compromise, and a shared vision for Nepal's future.

BEEN

Honoring The Contribution

Funded by the European Union as part of the Switch Asia Program, the Building Energy Efficiency in Nepal (BEEN) had held an event to honor 12 municipalities for their contributions. These municipalities were acknowledged for their efforts in creating bylaws and policies that facilitate the development of energy-efficient buildings.

By Keshab Poudel

The BEEN project was initiated in Nepal in March 2022 as a pilot initiative aimed at assisting the country in reducing carbon emissions associated with building construction.

The initiative is implemented by the University of Innsbruck, Austria, in collaboration with MinErgy Pvt. Ltd. (Nepal), Green Knowledge Solutions Pvt. Ltd. (India), and Asociación Española de Normalización (Spain).

At that time, only a limited number of local leaders and entrepreneurs involved in brick manufacturing were cognizant of the construction of energy-efficient buildings.

Following the enactment of the federal constitution in 2015, the responsibility for approving and permitting building designs and construction shifted to local governments.

However, none of these local au-



thorities had established laws or regulations specifically addressing energy-efficient buildings. Additionally, brick kiln operator possessed minimal knowledge regarding emerging technologies on energy efficiency.

After three years of dedicated engagement with 60 local governments across three provinces, as well as collaboration with the federal government and the private

sector, the BEEN project has successfully facilitated change across various sector

Celebration event

By recognizing the contributions of leaders of local municipalities and unveiling comprehensive manual for the production of energy-efficient bricks, the BEEN

project has illustrated a pathway to progress.

Numerous municipalities within the project areas have begun to implement energy-efficient building bylaws, supported by BEEN's technical expertise and guidance from specialists.

For the first time, twelve municipalities, including Pokhara Metropolitan City, Dhulikhel Municipality, Ghorahi Sub-Metropolitan City, and Hetauda Sub-Metropolitan Cities, have successfully enacted these bylaws. Meanwhile, Kathmandu Metropolitan City, Lalitpur Metropolitan City, and several other municipalities are currently in the process of drafting similar bylaws.

BEEN hosted event on September 27th to facilitate and launched manuals, can be referred as towards contribute to achieving g low carbon and resource-efficiency in the Nepalese building.

This event aimed to honor the municipalities that have pioneered efforts to diminish the carbon



footprint of the building sector by effectively formulating and implementing energy-efficient building bylaws, achieved through collaboration and consultation with essential stakeholders, practitioners, and both national and international experts.

Prakash Man Singh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Urban Development, and Veronique Lorenzo, the European Union Ambassador to Nepal, had distrib-

uted accolade to representatives from 12 municipalities for their exemplary leadership in the development and execution of energy-efficient building bylaws or guidelines. The BEEN Project is a four-year initiative aimed at curbing carbon emissions within Nepal's building sector.

DPM Singh emphasized that the initiatives will promote a low-carbon and resource-efficient building sector in Nepal. The adoption and execution of these policies represent a significant milestone and will aid in fulfilling the international commitments and targets established by the Government of Nepal in the Nationally Determined Contributions and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is important to note that these initiatives align with the priorities outlined in the 16th National Plan and budget, which aim to implement various measures related to energy efficiency across all three levels of government in the building sector.





DPM Singh also stated that the project is instrumental in achieving the objective of zero emissions by 2045.

Given Nepal's diverse bio-climatic zones and the recent challenges posed by climate change, these initiatives are particularly pertinent. They aim to foster a supportive policy environment for stakeholders throughout the building value chain, thereby promoting and facilitating the development of climate-responsive and energy-efficient buildings.

"It is essential for all three tiers of government to establish a framework that enhances efficiency and responsiveness to the populace's needs, while ensuring energy security and thermal comfort, and simultaneously mitigating adverse health effects," said DPM Singh.

DPM Singh articulated this sentiment during his inaugural address, expressing hope that the leadership of the municipalities recognized would inspire other municipalities to undertake similar initiatives.

DPM Singh expressed gratitude to

the European Union for its support of these vital initiatives and urged the EU to expand this initiative to additional provinces for broader impact.

Veronique Lorenzo, the EU Ambassador to Nepal, conveyed optimism that the project would contribute to a reduction in carbon emissions, noting that these efforts have played a significant role in decreasing the carbon footprint of Nepal's building sector.

Manju Devi Gurung, Deputy Mayor of Pokhara Metropolitan City, shared the municipality's perspective, highlighting that the project offered essential technical support for design preparation and provided training for the city's technicians.

"Pokhara is actively engaged in developing policies aimed at enhancing energy efficiency in buildings, with the belief that initiatives such as BEEN will facilitate the transformation of cities within Gandaki Province into more livable environments, rather than merely conventional urban areas."

Dr. Daniel Neyer, the Project Leader of BEEN, delivered the opening and closing remarks, emphasizing the project's role in advancing the marketplace for energy-efficient building products.

Suyesh Prajapati, the Project Leader of BEEN, underscored the significance of the manuals and discussed the vital information they provide for brick kiln industrialists and Saswati Chetia, Team Leader of Greentech Knowledge and Solution Pvt. Ltd, underscored the significance of the insulation manual.

Jose Luis Vinuesa-Santamaria, Head of Cooperation at the EU Delegation to Nepal, expressed optimism that the manual will meet the necessary informational needs. The program commenced with the lighting of lamps by DPM Singh.

Unveiling of Manuals

Two distinct knowledge products were unveiled as part of the program. Jose-Luis Vinuesa-Santamaria, Head of Cooperation at the

European Union, and Mahendra Kumar Sapkota Under Secretary of Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (MoFAGA) and Secretary of BEEN Project Advisory Committee jointly launched the manuals.

These manuals offer detailed, step-by-step instructions for the production of hollow and perforated fired bricks. They encompass all aspects, from the selection of raw materials and preparation of clay to the necessary mechanical equipment, production techniques, drying and firing processes, quality control measures, and troubleshooting strategies.

The Hollow Fired Brick Production Manual delivers extensive guidelines for creating hollow and perforated bricks. In a similar vein, the “Manual on the Application of Building Insulation Materials” presents essential information regarding various insulation materials, their applications, and comprehensive design guidelines. Both of these knowledge products were unveiled at the event.

Research indicates that hollow bricks provide considerable environmental and economic advantages, such as decreased clay consumption, reduced carbon emissions, and enhanced energy efficiency for climate control in buildings. This handbook serves as a vital resource for brick manufacturers, construction professionals, and all stakeholders within the building sector, aiding in the endeavor to minimize the carbon



footprint of building materials in Nepal.

The Manual on the Application of Building Insulation Materials similarly emphasizes the significance of insulation materials in enhancing the energy efficiency of buildings. It offers comprehensive information regarding the various types of insulation materials, their uses, and their thermal characteristics. The manual delivers explicit guidance on the selection and implementation of insulation materials, assisting architects, engineers, and builders in integrating energy-efficient designs into their projects.

The Insulation Manual offers a comprehensive overview of building insulation materials, detailing their thermal properties and their impact on energy efficiency and indoor comfort in buildings. It examines various types of insulation materials and the different ways they can be applied to roofs and walls. Additionally, it provides construction guidelines for these applications. The manual

also aims to bridge the skills gap and strengthen the expertise of professionals involved in building design and construction. The Hollow brick Manual is intended to be a key resource for brick entrepreneurs interested in the production of hollow or perforated bricks in Nepal. It provides practical guidance on manufacturing hollow fired bricks, including the selection and preparation of raw materials, mechanical equipment required for production, detailed steps in the mechanical green brick production process for hollow bricks, recommendations for the firing process, quality control practices, and troubleshooting tips.

Transition Towards A Low-Carbon

BEEN promotes the transition towards a low-carbon, resource-efficient, and circular building sector by enhancing green technologies through capacity building, policy, and financial interventions. This initiative aligns with nation-



energy supply.

The failure to design buildings with local bioclimatic conditions in mind has resulted in a standardized design approach, spanning from the hot plains at 150 meters to the frigid heights of 3500 meters.

Consequently, these buildings are subjected to uncomfortable thermal conditions and a growing reliance on energy-intensive heating and cooling systems.

al climate change commitments, recognizing the significant role of the building sector. Additionally, it supports the European Union's new standardization strategy aimed at advancing European standards in various regions.

The project also contributes to the overarching goals of the European Green Deal (2019) and the EU Circular Economy Action Plan (2020) by advocating for circular economy strategies within the building sector.

Executed in close collaboration with the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (MoFAGA), the project aids both local and federal governments, along with the private sector, in fostering low-cost, resource-efficient building practices.

Through the retrofitting of existing structures, the construction of energy-efficient new buildings, and the enhancement of professional capacities, the BEEN project is making a notable impact on climate-friendly development in Ne-

pal.

Four year Initiative

BEEN is a four-year initiative supported by the European Union through the SWITCH-Asia Grants Program. The primary objective of BEEN is to foster the development of low-carbon and resource-efficient construction practices in Nepal by promoting the design, construction, and renovation of environmentally sustainable buildings.

The project has been executed across 60 municipalities situated in four distinct bioclimatic zones, which encompass warm, temperate, cool temperate and cold climates within the Bagmati, Lumbini, and Gandaki provinces.

Climate-responsive building designs are crucial as Nepal experiences significant urbanization, with over 1.2 million new homes built in the past decade to accommodate the increasing urban population. This rapid construction has led to a new crisis that threatens

A study indicates that in Kathmandu, where temperatures typically remain within a comfortable range, approximately 60% of the total energy consumption is allocated to heating and cooling.

The impending consequences of climate change, coupled with shifting lifestyles, will intensify the demand for energy. As Nepal strives to attain net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045, it is crucial to confront these challenges through climate-responsive design and retrofitting. This approach will enable the building sector to transform into a sustainable, healthy, and energy-efficient environment that not only adapts to climate change but also plays a proactive role in its mitigation.

The Influence of Private Service Providers

Private service providers, encompassing the entire value chain

from design to construction, significantly influence the development of Nepal's construction industry.

Moreover, the policies established by financial institutions, especially those related to housing loans, are pivotal in determining the design and construction of buildings. The building permit system, regulated by municipal bylaws, serves as a critical regulatory mechanism within the sector.



Funded by the European Union under the Switch Asia Program, the Building Energy Efficiency in Nepal (BEEN) hosted an event to felicitate 12 municipalities acknowledging their roles and contributions in making bylaws and policies favorable for the construction of energy efficient buildings.

BEEN has been actively engaged in enhancing the capabilities of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) within the construction sector by fostering capacity building in collaboration with MSME associations. This partnership-driven approach promotes ownership and ensures long-term sustainability. The initiative employs innovative marketing strategies to highlight energy-efficient building practices across various bio-climatic zones, thereby raising public awareness and boosting demand for energy efficiency (EE) and renewable energy (RE) services and products. Additionally, collaboration with financial institutions seeks to establish preferential financing options, while the

project aspires to institutionalize energy-efficient building design in 30 partner municipalities through the formulation of energy-efficient building regulations.

Project's Achievements

In its third year, BEEN launched impactful awareness campaigns that convened key stakeholders for field visits to demonstrate buildings tailored to bioclimatic conditions. Significant accomplishments include the increased involvement of entrepreneurs in the production of hollow bricks, thereby advancing energy efficiency and resource-efficient construction practices.

A series of focus group discussions engaged 176 participants from eight categories of MSMEs within the construction value chain, yielding valuable insights that will inform the BEEN project's strategies for capacity development and marketing initiatives.

BEEN is dedicated to enhancing the capabilities of micro, small,

and medium enterprises (MSMEs) by providing quality improvement training for producers of Hollow Concrete Blocks (HCB) and Compressed Stabilized Earth Blocks (CSEB) for aspiring entrepreneurs. This initiative aims to increase the availability of resource-efficient building materials within the local market.

A technical manual, validated by a consortium of Nepali experts, academics, and government representatives, serves as a crucial resource for designers, who are key stakeholders in the construction industry. The Training of Master Trainers (TOT) program has empowered these trainers to educate architects and engineers on effective design strategies.

Furthermore, participants in the training workshop acquired knowledge regarding the design and implementation of efficient heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, as well as solar water heating systems.

HELVETAS-NEPAL'S RIVERBED PROJECT

Brining Three Tires Of Governments Together

Helvetas-Nepal's Riverbed Farming Project (RbF) has shown that involving various stakeholders including local level and provincial level governments in a partnership significantly enhances the project's sustainability.

By Keshab Poudel

Janaklal Chadhary, aged 69, hails from Rajghat, ward 8 of Krishnapur Municipality, ward 8 in Kanchanpur District, and became involved in riverbed agriculture in the initial stages of 2007. He played a key role in establishing Mohana Bagar Kheti Krishak Samuha.

With backing from Helvetas-Nepal and the District Development Committee of Kanchanpur, Municipality, District Agriculture Knowledge Center, farmers without land or with limited access to it came together to form this group.

“I took on the leadership position because Helvetas-Nepal’s riverbed initiative emphasized working closely with all stakeholders including the local governments,” said Chaudhary. “From the beginning, the emphasis on strong partnerships among the group members, along with the collaboration and support from Helvetas-Nepal and the local levels at the time, has been instrumental in its ongoing success,” shared Chaudhary.

Seventeen years later, Janak Lal

Chaudhary’s son, Balbir Chaudhary, 42, is now at the helm of the group,

“Even though Helvetas-Nepal’s riverbed farming project concluded in



continuing the tradition of collaboration and partnership with the Municipality’s Agriculture Section, the provincial level District Agriculture Knowledge Center, and Helvetas-Nepal.

2013 in Sudur Pachim Province, they continue to reach out to us for advice and support,” Chaudhary mentioned. “The Agriculture District Agriculture Knowledge Center and the Municipality are providing us with grants to un-

dertake deep bore wells for irrigation and to distribute seeds and fertilizers.”

From its inception, Tika Ram Thapa, currently serving as the secretary of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperatives, has been an advocate of the collaborative model utilized by Helvetas-Nepal in the Riverbed Farming initiative, believing it to be crucial for the project’s success and longevity.

Thapa, who previously led the District Agriculture Office in Kanchanpur and collaborated closely with Helvetas-Nepal to boost Riverbed Farming, noted early challenges in convincing local communities about the economic benefits of this method. He mentioned how farmers initially doubted the viability of growing vegetables in sand, a cost that proved to be a financial burden for the poorer farmers.

Hari Gugung, the team leader of Helvetas Nepal’s Riverbed Farming Project, explained that Helvetas-Nepal engaged in negotiations with all relevant stakeholders, fostering a collaborative and partnership-based approach. Gurung highlighted the importance of



transferring ownership to the community and local, provincial, and central governments as the key to the project’s lasting success.

Draupadi Rana, Deputy Mayor of Krishnapur Municipality, appreciates Helvetas-Nepal’s strategy of working in partnership, promoting ownership among the community, and subverting the failure of many other projects that operated in isolation.

As this model of cooperation and partnership flourish, the idea has been effectively replicated by various organizations.

Many agencies are now adopting Helvetas Nepal’s approach at a national level, engaging with both the national and regional governments as well as local communities.

Although the origins of riverbed farming in Nepal trace back 60 years, to Indian seasonal migrant farmers, Helvetas Nepal introduced the

concept of involving local governments, particularly Village Development Committees (VDCs) and District Development Committees (DDCs), in the initiative to support landless or land-poor families by providing them the opportunity to grow vegetables seasonally over a period.

This approach has led to the identification of suitable riverbeds, the initiation of trials with 670 families in 2007, and the expansion to a cultivated area of 52 hectares in Kailali and Kanchanpur districts of far Western Nepal, which has since become part of Sudur Paschim Province under Nepal’s federal system.

Starting in Kanchanpur and Kailali districts, local authorities in the south of Nepal and provincial governments have increasingly prioritized riverbed farming as a means to address the challenges faced by landless and land-poor communities.

Started After Federalism

Launched following Nepal’s transition from a unitary to a federal state, Helvetas-Nepal’s Riverbed Farming Project exemplified the successful establishment of collaboration and part-





considerable number of Dalits in our municipality do not possess land ownership. Cultivating crops on the unused riverbank land serves dual purposes: it creates a livelihood for these farmers and enhances agricultural productivity in underutilized areas.” We are working diligently with Helvetas-Nepal and Manab Kalyan Samaj to effectively implement river bank farming at various levels.

The rural municipality has provided support by constructing a 300-meter deep borehole for irrigation in Ward No. 3. Furthermore, efforts are being made to assist landless farmers by distributing fertilizers and high-quality seed varieties.

Due to the positive outcomes and continuous collaboration with Helvetas-Nepal and its local partner, the Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture, and Cooperatives has developed provincial level RBF Guideline.

nership among Federal, Provincial, and Local Governments for project implementation.

Originating in the Kanchanpur and Kailali Districts of Sudur Paschim Province, the initiative also utilized its experiences to foster partnerships through close cooperation with local and provincial governments in Koshi Province and Madhesh Province.

The project engaged communities from Laxminiyapur Rural Municipality in Dhanusha District, Rajdevi Municipality in Rautahat District of Madhesh Pradesh, to Kankaimai Municipality and Rangeli Municipality in Koshi Province, thereby integrating them with the newly formed federal structures.

The project facilitated the connection between farmer groups and local government agriculture centers, as well as the District Agriculture Knowledge Center of Provincial governments.

Throughout my two-year term as the Mayor of Rajdevi Municipality, I came to appreciate the importance of engaging closely with the local community, a principle advocated by Helvetas Nepal and its local partner. Each year, the Bagmati River was responsible for the erosion of a considerable amount of our arable land. In response to this challenge, we implemented several natural remedial strategies, including the planting of lemongrass and bam-

boo, in partnership with Friends of Change,” stated Bhikhari Prasad Yadav, Mayor of Rajdevi Municipality.

Ramshrestha Yadav, the leader of Friends of Change Nepal, emphasized that collaboration with local government enhances the community’s understanding of local governance functions. The municipality’s agricultural center has been offering limited assistance to farmers by providing bamboo plants, fertilizers, and deep boring services.

Laxminiya Rural Municipality has established a strong collaboration with Helvetas-Nepal and the local organization Manab Kalyan Samaj Nepal, which has taken a leading role in river bank farming across five local governments in the Dhanusha district.

“The strength of this initiative lies in its collaboration with both local and provincial governments, which even share the financial responsibilities,” remarked Pramod Yadav, Executive Director of Manab Kalyan Samaj Nepal. “Our approach is fundamentally rooted in partnership with the Palikas.

“Bhogendra Mishra, the Mayor of the Laxminiya Rural Municipality, noted, “A



This guideline instructs all eight District Agriculture Knowledge Centers to share knowledge with farmers and local governments.

In order to ensure food security and improve nutrition, it is essential to allocate land to impoverished and landless communities throughout the province. These communities have remained neglected for too long; river bank farming presents a practical solution,” stated Roshan Kumar Mehata, Senior Agriculture Officer for Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperative Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperative of Madhesh Province.

The Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperative has endorsed guidelines for Riverbed Farming, which include setting aside a budget annually and distributing it through the Agriculture Knowledge Centers across different districts.

“Given the significant number of landless and land-poor individuals, the Madhsh Provincial Government has made the decision to utilize riverbank lands. The policy guidelines are a pivotal first step toward realizing this vision,” stated Mehata, a Senior Agriculture Extension Officer at the Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperative.

More than 6,000 rivers in Nepal experience floods, inundating surrounding fields. Following the wet



season, which starts in October, there is a dry spell leading to the drying of the riverbeds, revealing nutrient-rich soil for four to five months. This period mainly occurs in 22 districts of Nepal's plains.

In these dried riverbeds, individuals with little or no land are cultivating watermelons, pumpkins, cucumbers, and tomatoes.

“Helvetas Nepal has been providing assistance to local and provincial governments in their efforts towards socially inclusive economic development,” said Dr. Prabin Manandhar, Country Director, Helvetas Nepal. “Riverbed farming stands as a variety of model projects that enable disadvantaged groups to be self-sufficient through independent labor. This project contributes towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, with a focus on eliminat-

ing poverty and hunger, promoting economic growth, and enhancing gender equality.”

Through its work in Nepal, Helvetas - Nepal draws from a history spanning decades in promoting collaboration and mutual support. The Riverbed Farming Project is employed as a tool to strengthen community alliances, raise the earnings of households, and improve access to food for families lacking or having little access to land in the Terai region of Nepal.

Motivated by the initiative, numerous municipal authorities have declared the rules for cooperation and alliance in River-bed cultivation. The Madhesh and Sudur Pachim Provinces have given their seal of approval to these rules.

Helvetas Nepal selects NGOs at the local level as partners. Through collaboration and partnership with these local partners, Helvetas Nepal supports the formation of farmers' groups before connecting them with local and provincial governments.

As Nepalese are learning the forms and function of federal structures, Helvetas Nepal's RbF Project has taught people functional knowledge how to engage with all three tiers of governments and utilize resources available there.



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