



# SAMBAD

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As promised we have offered you yet another issue of Sambad with more interesting reads. It is indeed a pleasure for us all to be in the New Year 2011 and be presenting this edition of Sambad.

A lot of changes have taken place in the country in the last six months; From the appointment of a new Prime Minister to the extension of Constitutional Assembly for another three months. The country saw civil society, social-networking groups and organizations unite against the slacking process in the Constituent Assembly. It is an indication that the Nepalese have had enough of the political deadlocks, and if need be, there will be more protests to push the leaders to come into a concrete consensus. More interestingly, the youth have been leading the recent social campaigns. It is a positive sign, and shows the involvement and interest of our youth in shaping the future of our country. These changes are significant as we all await a new constitution to be drafted by 31 September 2011, which is expected to eventually pave way for the formation of the New Nepal.

The changes have also affected us here at IIDS. The power of youth can never be underestimated, and IIDS always aims to encourage youths for their endeavors. As an effort, some new appointments have taken place at IIDS. Mr. Nanda Kaji Budhathoki has been appointed as a new Economist along with three new interns. A few more are likely to join in the near future. The idea is to have a team of young professionals who will be able to bring new ideas and contribute to the mission of IIDS.

We have recently carried out a field study of Business Expectation Survey (BES) carried out for the first time in the country. BES is expected to measure and forecast the expectations of the business community by providing qualitative data in both the short and medium terms. The study team, here at IIDS, thoroughly enjoyed carrying out the survey. Interacting with business community in Kathmandu, Biratnagar, Birgunj, Bhairawa, Nepalgunj, Dhangadi and Pokhara was a rewarding experience. The team is now working on writing the report, and is expected to release it soon.

IIDS carried out a study, Gender Responsive Decentralized Governance: A Study in Asia funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) under the leadership of Dr. Meena Acharya. This study was one of its first kinds. The Three Year Interim Plan mandated for at least 10 percent of budget allocation for women related programmes in the national budget. The research aimed to study the budgeting process at the local level and the implementation of gender budget. The final draft has been submitted.

The research team at IIDS has been working on a number of interesting projects and we aim to fill you with more interesting updates of IIDS in the next edition as the events in the country and at IIDS take a positive turn.

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## PROJECTS:

◆ Business Expectation Survey (BES) was conducted by IIDS with funding assistance from the Confederation of Nepalese Industries(CNI). The survey aims to measure the confidence of businesses in Nepal. A total of 175 interviews with business persons were conducted in all the five development regions of Nepal. The final report is expected to be out in December.

◆ The "Gender Responsive Decentralized Governance: A Study in Nepal" was carried out by IIDS under ADB-RETA (Regional Technical Assistance). It is an action research program funded by the Asian Development Bank and coordinated by the enterprise arm of the Australian National University (ANU). The RETA involves three countries: the Republic of Nepal, the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Republic of Indonesia. The overall objective of this project is to promote gender sensitive service delivery through gender responsive budgeting within the context of decentralization and good governance. The findings of the field study was analyzed on the final report which was submitted on June 2011.

◆ Interaction programme on decentralization was held at Hotel De'l Annapurna on 20th of January 2011. It was jointly organized by the Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IIDS) and Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research(NIBR).The programme was organized in order to discuss the findings of the study "Decentralization in Nepal", a project funded by Norwegian Social and Regional Research Council through NIBR.

## Participation and events:

Dr Bhekh B Thapa, Dr Mohan Man Sainju, Dr Mahesh Banskota and Dr Bishnu Dev Pant attended the world conference on "Recreating South Asia: Democracy, Social Justice and Sustainable Development" from 24 - 26 February 2011 in New Delhi, India. In the conference, Dr Banskota presented a paper on "Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development: Nepal's Difficult Transformation".

Mr. Shankar Aryal, Research Fellow, participated in the 12th Annual Global Development Conference on "Financing Development in a

post-crisis World: The need for a fresh look " held in Bogota, Colombia on 13-15 January 2011.

Dr Aruna Palikhe and Dr Dwarika Nath Dhungel attended the workshop on Democratic Local Governance in Asia: Reforms and Innovation in Local Democracy in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on May 13-14, 2011.

Dr Aruna Palikhe and Mr Mukesh Khanal attended the refresher course in Public Economics organized by the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, New Delhi from May 23-27, 2011.

Dr. Aruna Palikhe participated in the seminar on "Emerging potentials of International Trade for South Asian LDCs" held at Soaltee Crown Plaza, Kathmandu on February 14, 2011.

Mr Khanal participated in the ILO/NPC organized seminar on "Employment-Led Growth" at Hotel Malla on March 9, 2011.

Mr Khanal attended a workshop on "Domestic Credit Rating Agency" at Hotel Annapurna on April 15, 2011.

*Mr Khanal published the following:*

- "Tax System and Nepal's Fiscal Woes" in Republica(July 3)
- "Time to Ditch the Peg" in Republica (May 29)
- "Rights Shares: Wrong news" in Republica (May 1)
- "Bank mergers: A bad idea" in Republica (April 12)
- A research paper Titled "Monetary Neutrality in the Nepalese Economy during 1975-2008" in the Economic Review published by the Nepal Rastra Bank (April)
- "Tackling Nepal's Unemployment rate" in Republica (March 22)
- "Get Rid of the VAT" in Republica (March 12)

# *Nepal Tourism Year: Still a Long Way to Go*

- Mukesh Khanal\*

Nepal Tourism Year 2011 began with some good noise. The Nepali government, as well as various promoters of tourism, was gung ho about the prospect of hosting large number of tourists this year. Celebrations and events were organized all over the world—from London to New York to Shanghai—to ensure that the tourists knew this was a year for visiting Nepal. Even LGBT rights people got into the bandwagon, and advertised Nepal as a place where lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people were more, if not equally, welcomed.

This year, the Blue Diamond Society even organized functions where gay tourists—who do not have marriage rights in their own country—get married and receive a certificate. Although the certificates are not legal, the tourists have recognized the well-meaning gestures, and have felt accepted by the people of Nepal. All said and done, it looks like we left no stone unturned to make 2011 successful as Nepal Tourism Year.

However, it has already been six months since the Nepal Tourism Year 2011 started, and already there are glaring problems that can be observed in the tourism industry. While it's always nice to see the government and private enterprises striving to bring in more tourists into Nepal, the problems need to be fixed first.

First things first, tourism industry in Nepal pays too much attention to international tourists. It's always nice to have more foreign tourists arriving in Nepal. However, we have to realize that their arrival increases during promoted years, and then wanes down. Nepali tourism industry cannot sustain itself without domestic tourists. The tourism industry has to confront this problem because a blatant neglect of domestic tourists can be observed in Nepal's popular tourist destinations whether it is Pokhara or Solukhumbu.

There are areas around Pokhara and the Annapurna circuit where domestic tourists are not given rooms for lodging even when enough rooms are available. Every year, many suffer from this discrimination between domestic and foreign tourists. Nepali tourists and trekkers have had to pitch their tents outside in the hills because hotels and lodges would not rent out the available rooms. Apparently, the problem seems to stem from the fact that Nepali government has set different rates for Nepali citizens and foreign citizens when it comes to food and lodging with rate for Nepali citizens being considerably less than what foreigners pay.

Last year, I had a friend who traveled to Namche Bazaar in Solukhumbu. He told me a story on his return. He had gone to a restaurant in Namche and ordered some food. After waiting for a long time, he realized that foreigners who had come into the restaurant after him were being served their food while his had still not arrived. He noticed that the wait-staff would serve first to any foreigner before serving a Nepali traveler, regardless of who ordered first. Nepali domestic tourists were made to wait.

If these are only a few instances of such behavior, then there's no problem. But, if such instances are endemic in our tourism industry, it reflects a trend of hotels and lodges refusing to let a Nepali traveler into their rooms, and restaurants serving domestic travelers late. Maybe the low rate that a Nepali traveler pays in Ghandruk is barely enough to cover the cost of maintaining and keeping the rooms in order. Maybe the low rate that a Nepali traveler pays in Namche is barely enough to cover the cost of food that is being served.

If that is the case, then the hotels and lodges should be brought to the attention of government and the tourism board to review such practices and find appropriate solutions. Discriminating between domestic and foreign tourists is not the right approach to deal with this issue. Our government and the tourism board should also pay heed to such issues. Food prices as well as maintenance costs of hotels and lodges keep rising every day due to inflation and other economic factors. So, the government and tourism board have to amend their policies and rates from time to time. Hotels, lodges and restaurants should not have to suffer due to the policymakers' negligence and inefficiency. After all, tourism is also a business, and no business wants to incur a loss.

However, if the discrimination between domestic and foreign tourists is not borne out of economic survival but out of inherent prejudice for one's skin color or nationality, then actions should be taken to punish

these hotels and lodges. If the perpetrators of discrimination are not punished, domestic tourists are going to suffer.

The Nepali tourism industry also suffers from problems regarding hygiene and infrastructure. Since 2011 is a promoted year for tourists, there are bound to be more tourists this year than previous years. So, questions regarding health and infrastructure become pertinent. Are there enough rooms in hotels and lodges in our tourist areas to accommodate the sudden influx of more travelers? Are the hotels and lodges clean and hygienic enough to make the tourists happy, and avoid a disease epidemic? Cleanliness and hygienic dining environment are severely lacking in Nepal's tourist destinations.

We also have highways and roads that are crumbling. There aren't enough roads leading to many places. The transportation infrastructure needs to improve in Nepal. In the past few years, each year has seen an increase in the total number of tourists—domestic and foreign—who travel all over Nepal. However, some of the most beautiful areas high up in the hills and mountains cannot be traveled due to lack of basic transportation infrastructure. Travel roads and trekking routes need to be developed fully and facilities like restaurants, lodging and restrooms need to be constructed to enhance the traveling experience. We keep hearing talks about making tourism our priority sector for economic growth. But, the investments in tourism infrastructure and development have, so far, lagged farther behind than the talks.

Nepal's poor road and highway infrastructure has meant that most people who travel within Nepal choose air travel. Air travel is especially popular due to the rough terrain and geography of Nepal. However, there are some shortcomings. Many beautiful destinations do not have airports. This has meant that despite being an attractive destination, these places have not seen substantial growth in the number of tourists who visit there. Also, air travel infrastructure in Nepal is inadequate. As a result, we are incapable to handle off-season travelers, let alone those during the peak-tourist season.

Lastly, flight delays and cancellations in Nepal are chronic problems during off-seasons as well. Already, these problems have been highlighted this year while handling the high volume of traffic during the pre-monsoon tourist season. The post-monsoon tourist season will be even worse because we get more tourists post-monsoon than pre-monsoon. The airline industry in Nepal has to realize that tourists plan every hour of their day, carefully, to maximize their enjoyment. So, a flight delay of a couple of hours or a cancellation altogether disrupts people's plans.

The airline industry, as well as the overall tourism industry, cannot afford to neglect the comforts of the travelers. This creed becomes all the more important this year since it is a year being especially promoted to increase the tourist traffic. So, this is the right time for Nepal's tourism industry and everyone associated with it to step up and become professional—a quality that Nepal's tourism industry severely lacks today.

*\*Mr Khanal is an Economist at IIDS*

Agriculture constitutes the largest share of Nepal's GDP. It remains the major source of income for nearly 90 percent of rural people. However, the performance of agriculture has not been impressive, and challenges remain to keep pace with the 2.2% per annum growth in population (Regmi, 1999). Despite government's endeavors to launch development activities, the country's agricultural sector has remained rather stagnant, even resulting in a decline in agriculture productivity. Out of total arable land, only 27.7 percent is irrigated (World Bank, 2008), most of them are located in the Terai region of Nepal. Farmers in mountain and hilly regions largely depend on rainwater with traditional production system. There is a growing concern why Nepal's agriculture policy and program are unable to achieve expected goal? Besides the constraints like terrain structure of farm land and irrigation facility, there are some other causes which were given less importance, for example, adequate education in agriculture sector, technical expertise, poorly planned farm management policy and lack of skilled farm managers at local level. Country needs a technological revolution in agriculture sectors, with skilled and well informed farm managers. Serious efforts should be made to increase the agriculture productivity and farm incomes that will ultimately contribute to improve living standard of the farmers.

Even within the existing farming system, the properly managed farm could help to increase agriculture productivity and farmers' income. In order to support this statement and provide evidence, a study was carried out in a village in mid-hill regions of Nepal. This study suggested some farm management strategies by conducting an economic analysis of agriculture data 2005 (Palikhe, 2007). The area studied is located in an altitude of 1,000 to 1,400 meter above the sea level, in Chapagaun VDC in Lalitpur District. Information was collected from 47 farm households through a sample survey. The study found that rice was the major crop cultivated followed by different variety of crops. As rice is a staple crop in Nepal emphasis is always given to rice production. The study identified the positive and negative effect of

cropping system on rice and recommended the best cropping pattern for the farmers to increase the productivity and income.

Cropping system is a subsystem of a farming that is confined to the farm's crop-production enterprise. It includes all components required for the production of a series of crops on a farm. It was found above that seven cropping patterns were practiced in the study area which were; rice-wheat, rice-wheat+mustard, rice-wheat+potato, rice-wheat+vegetables, rice-mustard, rice-vegetables and rice-potato. Of those, some were profitable and some were not. The profitable patterns were rice-wheat+vegetables, rice-vegetables and rice-potato.

Cost and benefit analysis was done for each cropping pattern. Farmers who were including vegetables in their cropping patterns were making profit. Therefore, crops planted with each patterns makes a great difference in income and profit. A comparative analysis was made on the amount of inputs applied on rice and preceding crops of each patterns, and yield and profit obtained.

Table 1 in Appendix shows the amount of input used for rice production under above mentioned three



patterns, whereas Table 2 shows the amount of input for successive crops. These tables show that lowest amount of input for rice was with rice-vegetables, followed by rice-wheat and rice-wheat+vegetables respectively. On the other hand input applied for preceding crops was lowest for rice-wheat followed by rice-vegetables and rice-wheat+vegetables. Table 3 provides estimates on profit, yield and net income of rice under these pattern. It is clear that rice under two patterns was giving profit whereas rice under rice-wheat was not giving the profit. This was due to the reason of higher input use on rice with this pattern, this also resulting to higher yield. On the other hand rice under rice-vegetables patterns

was giving the highest profit, yield and net income was less than under rice-wheat pattern but higher than under rice-wheat+vegetables pattern with lowest amount of input used. This was due to the residual effect of vegetables on rice. Being more specific, inside this rice-vegetables pattern, two farmers who were adopting rice-potato pattern were able to make the highest yield of 230 kg/ropani of rice with lowest input of only 4.2 and 145 kg/ropani of urea and cattle compost respectively. Among vegetables potato had the greatest positive effect on rice production. Therefore, practice of non



profitable cropping patterns should be avoided, and those patterns with positive impact on rice should be adopted, rice-vegetables specially, rice-potato cropping pattern being

strongly recommended. Adoption of this cropping pattern could both increase the productivity as well as the income of farmers among those practiced by the farmers in the village.

Several study conducted in the past had also provided evidence that potato leaves residue effect on soil. However, identification of the impact of cropping pattern on rice production, raise some questions here: Are these impacts of cropping pattern sustainable? What should be done to make this impact sustainable, so that all the farmers could make good profit and higher yield from rice production in the study area? Therefore, further in-depth research should be done to identify the sustainability of the impact of cropping patterns on rice production.

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## Appendix

**Table 1. Input Applied for Rice under Different Cropping Patterns ( Unit : kg)**

Cropping patterns	No. of farmers	Amount of DAP	Amount of MOP	Amount of urea	Amount of chicken compost	Amount of cattle compost
Rice- wheat	17.0	0.4	0.3	6.8	17.9	335.3
Rice- wheat+vegetables	11.0	0.2	0.1	6.3	0.0	277.7
Rice- vegetables	8.0	0.3	0.1	4.1	0.0	257.2

Source: Field Survey 2006

**Table 2. Input Applied for Preceding Corps under Different Cropping Patterns ( Unit : kg/ropani)**

Cropping patterns	Amount of DAP	Amount of MOP	Amount of urea	Amount of chicken compost	Amount of cattle compost
Rice- wheat	0.1	0.9	4.1	58.6	254.7
Rice- wheat+vegetables	0.2	3.3	22.4	95.7	502.0
Rice- vegetables	2.8	0.3	12.0	41.8	375.5

Source: Field Survey 2006

**Table 3 Yield, Net income and Profit of Rice under Different Cropping Patterns**

Cropping patterns	Yield kg/ropani	Net income Rs/ropani	Profit Rs/ropani
Rice- wheat	196.2	2,129.8	-137.3
Rice- wheat+vegetables	172.4	1,708.0	45.9
Rice- vegetables	176.9	1,738.1	128.6

Source: Field Survey 2006

Note: Full research of this paper was submitted as a Master's Dissertation by the author to Tokyo University of Agriculture, Japan.

\*Dr Palikhe is a Senior Economist at IIDS.

Foreign policy that promotes national economic interests and business is known as economic diplomacy. By means of economic diplomacy, governments try to keep international economic relations with other countries. They seek to promote trade and investment while looking for international markets for their products and services. Traditionally, diplomacy of all countries including Nepal was limited just to maintain political relations with other countries. With the collapse of the Rana regime, Nepal broke its isolation with the rest of the world and started a new era of foreign diplomacy. It became member of several regional and international organizations. In that period, country's whole effort was concentrated to establish itself as a peace loving, sovereign and independent country. Nepal's main priority was primarily security and geo-strategic concern. Diplomacy did not take into account the economic interest of the country. With the increasing realization of democratization and globalization Nepal has transformed itself from highly regulated economy to the open economy in 1986. These changing scenarios over the years have greater impacts on the political diplomacy. With the increasing trade volume, there was rising trade deficit, growing migrants, weak inflow of foreign aid from the bilateral and multilateral organization despite huge potential of investment opportunities in various sectors such as infrastructure, water resources, tourism and others natural resources. These issues compelled to think of stronger economic diplomacy in Nepal after 1990.

Economic diplomacy should be based on mutual benefits, national interest and understanding for long term sustainable development, which also helps to resolve the conflicts between different potential rivals. Examples are the economic cooperation among the European Union Countries, recent trade relation between China and India, China and America etc, When economic interest overshadows the political disputes, the economic diplomacy can lessen the conflicts among the countries.

Nepal has huge potentiality for economic development if we use the economic diplomacy optimally by means of bilateral, regional and multilateral relation. Through economic diplomacy, it is possible to bring large chunk of aid, capital, technical expertise and FDI in the country. Nepal has huge natural diversity and rich in natural beauty and has a lot of potential for nature based tourism. Nepal also has a large share of young population, which can contribute to the economic development of the country. Located in between the two emerging powerhouses of the world- China and India and just emerging from conflict and in the process of restructuring, Nepal still has a lot of international support and goodwill. The challenge is to cash opportunities through skillful economic diplomacy.

Despite these potentials, there are numerous problems such as poor infrastructural development, huge untapped natural and human resources, large section of people below the poverty line, capital constraints, landlocked country, political instability, etc. Such mounting challenges can be reduced through balanced trade based on mutual benefits, optimal and sustainable development of tourism, offering overseas employment to large numbers of unemployed people so that huge amount of remittances can be brought to the countries. There is also a need to create favorable climate for attracting foreign direct investment on large hydropower projects, which can create substantial revenue after exporting electricity to the power deficit countries of the South Asia.

For successful implementation of economic diplomacy, there is a need to have coordinated efforts and planning among the different agencies such as foreign diplomatic missions/Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Planning Commission, private sectors, Ministry of Tourism, Non Resident Nepali (NRN), students studying abroad, etc. Economic diplomacy is best if carried out through the public private partnership. For developing proper economic diplomacy, MOFA must play significant role.

Through consultation of different organizations such as Nepal Tourism Board(NTB), Nepal Chambers of Commerce (NCC), Confederations of Nepalese industries (CNI) etc, it would then be able to promote different areas such as trade, tourism, cultural exchange and attract FDI to various sectors ranging from agricultural sector to the hydropower plants.

Above all, politically stable governments, cooperative cultures among the political parties, competent and dynamic bureaucracy are the main factors that give positive message to the foreigners. Economic diplomacy will be effective, if we can show good governance, domestic peace and harmony and commitment on human rights.

*\*Mr. Budhathoki is an Economist at IIDS*

The integration of ten more countries into the European Union in 2004, and the opening up of borders, as a consequence of the Schengen Treaty, has enabled travel and migration on a large scale in Europe. The Schengen Treaty, originally signed in 1985 in a small village in Luxemburg, promotes a unified Europe.

However, the unification process struggles with many problems: discrimination, integration of new countries within the EU as well as the integration of immigrants, trafficking, intercultural misunderstanding, and different visions in terms of policy. The important questions that arise during the integration process are whether Europe will go towards standardization or diversification, and how the new migrants integrate in their host countries.

In 2009, the European collaborative project, *SCIP: Causes and Consequences of Early Socio- Cultural Integration Processes among New Immigrants in Europe*, was launched. The NORFACE (New Opportunities for Research Funding Agency Cooperation in Europe) Transnational Research Program funded the SCIP project. The project tackled the theme of how different national contexts shape the early stages of integration of new immigrants. It also looked into why dense ethnic networks and ethnic identification appeared to form an obstacle to integration for some groups, while others appeared to use this as a source that facilitated integration. This project is the first one to cope with this theme on a large scale.

The research is conducted in Germany, The Netherlands, Great Britain and Ireland. The study concentrates on the migrants from Poland, Turkey, Pakistan, and Morocco. The aim is to compare the experiences of groups coming from different cultural, social, economic and religious backgrounds. The intercultural existence of different ethnic groups is a vital case not only in Europe but among many countries in the world, because the international mobility has reached unprecedented levels.

On one hand, movement of people, most often through migration, is a significant step of global integration. On the other hand, it causes misunderstandings among groups of people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. On one hand, migrants contribute to the economy of the host country, especially Germany, where the immigrants are helping the shrinking and aging German population. On the other hand, immigrants can be problematic for the socio-economic scene of the host country when they feel suppressed and discriminated against. For example: riots erupted, in 2005, in Paris and other French cities among the North African Arabs of Algerian, Tunisian and Moroccan heritage. A state of emergency had to be declared in France. The underlying causes were the problem of integration, cultural misunderstanding (mainly between the Muslim and the western model), and discrimination.

For a long time, the European Union has been trying to find solutions to these problems. Since 2009, the SCIP project's main aim is to give an outlook of the situation of the new migrants. The survey collects information about the migrants' social background and their current situation in the country. Religion is perceived as an important factor. It is captured through questions asking the frequency of attending the religious ceremonies, except marriage or funeral; self evaluation of religiousness; and attitude towards fasting. Discrimination is captured by questions asking the feeling of being discriminated in the public sphere in the host country and by the assumed reasons for such discrimination.

All questions aim to achieve a single objective: the measurement of integration of an immigrant in the host society. As a consequence, the context of the level of language, attendance in the integration groups (where immigrants can find useful information about the host country, learn the language and participate in workshops), and the knowledge about the policy are captured in this empirical study. That last issue is captured with questions about participation and knowledge of the

media life and consciousness of the political scene of the host country.

In 2009, the German weekly news magazine, *Der Spiegel*, published an article about the disconcerting results of the study, which was conducted by the Berlin Institute for Population and Development. The study concluded that Turks ‘...*tend to remain strangers in Germany, even after 50 years and three generations in some cases*’ (Elger et.al. 2009). An alarmingly high percentage of the immigrants live with poor prospects of a decent education and career advancement. As a result, Turkish immigrants were poorly integrated and poorly educated than the rest of the German society.

Despite the invaluable results, the SCIP study tries to provide critical information about the processes of integrations, and which process is more important than others. The project is planned to be a panel-design study to enable long-term observation of changes in the immigrant situation in the four countries. It aims to understand and answer the most important questions that will determine the future of the European Union. The vital questions concern the coexistence and integration potential of the immigrants in the EU.

Generally, those who migrate are ones that have access to resources and information. Nepalese citizens migrate, mainly, with a hope for better work, income, and/or education. The last census from 2001 shows that out of 1,154,576 persons who went abroad as migrant workers, 900,000 went to India; 170,000 to the Gulf states; and 40,000 to the West—Europe, US, Japan, Australia (Khatri 2007). The new census isn’t available yet, but it is fair to assume that the numbers are going to be higher, as the Nepalese experience increased access to social networks and information resources, for example, the internet.

These new migrants should be aware of the problems that arise when settling in new countries because of the different socio-cultural backgrounds. The European experience can be especially useful to the Bhutanese refugees from Nepal’s eastern

refugee camps, and who have been accepted for migration to western countries by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). Since November 2007, UNHCR’s largest and most promising program to resettle Bhutanese refugees living in Nepal has begun. The vast majority of them are going to the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Netherlands, Norway and Denmark.

The policymakers at UNHCR and the host countries should realize that the various push and pull factors of migration result in the integration process in the host countries lasting even a few generations. This is quite evident in the case of Turkish integration in Germany, which is still a struggle even after around 50 years, and about three or four generations. These factors and problems should be taken into consideration by the migrants and policymakers in preparations for resettlement.

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*\* Ms. Pendrakowska is a student of Sociology at the University of Warsaw. She interned at IIDS during the month of April 2011.*

# Petroleum Woes in Nepal

-Ishani Shrestha\*

As we pulled away from the airport, I was beyond thrilled to be back on the streets of Kathmandu after spending two years away from home. I eagerly rolled down my window to relish the smell of rain I so dearly missed, when a giant diesel truck spewed a cloud of obnoxious black smoke at me. It didn't take me long after the incident to start noticing just how choked and polluted the streets were with vehicles of all sizes. And only two weeks later, fuel shortage started making the headlines.

Estimates show that the number of vehicles in the valley has increased 13 times between 1991 and 2010. So, the demand for fuel, especially petroleum, has soared to such an extent that Nepal's total export earnings is less than the money spent on importing petroleum products alone. If our petroleum products import worth Rs.59.53 billion is in itself capable of creating a trade deficit, should the government try to limit the number of vehicles on the roads or encourage biofuels instead? Is petroleum even receiving enough attention when sufferers of 16 hours/day power-cuts desperately want more resources to be dedicated towards hydropower? Although we are constantly reminded of the scarcity of petrol when we see long lines of frustrated motorcycle owners at the pump, we have yet to do anything substantial to reduce our dependence on oil.



An economy that is largely dependent on fossil fuel is unsustainable not only because its supply is limited but also because it contribute to climate change. Also, in the context of Nepal, where majority of the petroleum demand comes from the transportation sector, the irony lies in the fact that we simply do not have the infrastructure to support the rising number of vehicles. There are more than 450,000 automobiles in the Kathmandu valley but instead of dealing with this vehicular population explosion, we have conveniently decided to live with horrendous traffic jams. If we do not have enough parking spaces and well paved roads for these vehicles in the first place, why are we importing more each day? Thus it comes without surprise that the Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC) is borrowing billions from the government, the Employees Provident Fund and Citizens' Investment Trust to fund our increasing thirst for oil.

Instead of managing the number of vehicles to curb our petroleum demand, we have been increasing the price of petroleum. Unfortunately, average inflation in Nepal was around 11% in 2011. So raising

the already high price of oil would push the infaltion even further. Frustrated consumers will waste no time in staging protests and organizing bandhs. Our labor force already wastes valuable hours in the petroleum line; we certainly cannot afford more productivity losses due to strikes. If the government limits the quantity of oil supplied, the effects are likely to be similar. The only people who might celebrate such a decision would be dealers in the black market. In fact, the Kathmandu valley is already suffering from yet another petrol shortage because the NOC does not have enough money to

import from the Indian Oil Corporation. To add to the tension, NOC's decision to change oil tanker routes has sparked protests from Nepal Petroleum Transportation Entrepreneurs Federation. Such



struggles between suppliers, dealers and consumers have been going on for a long time, and it doesn't appear that the situation will be resolved anytime soon.

If we look at developed and emerging economies like the United States and China, the emphasis lies on increasing the fuel and vehicle efficiency standards as well as switching to hybrids and electric vehicles. In USA, in order to guarantee an energy-secure future, President Obama intends to cut oil imports by a third by



2025 through promotion of efficiency and alternative energy. For those who adopt greener technologies to reduce oil consumption, tax credits, deductions, exemptions and rebates are offered, alongside grants, loans and incentive payments. China, too, is subsidizing plug-in hybrids and electric vehicles. It is investing heavily on renewable energy sources to curb its dependence on foreign oil. However, for a developing nation like Nepal where half of the population lies below the international poverty line of \$1.25 a day, promoting such expensive technologies is not a feasible solution at the moment.

On the whole, better administration in the transportation sector appears to be the most effective way to ameliorate our petroleum woes. The government should promote and develop public transportation as a safe, affordable and efficient way to travel. By upgrading the condition of public vehicles so that the general public prefers to use them instead of a vehicle of their own, we may be able to reduce our petroleum consumption. These are undoubtedly challenging goals, but bringing them to fruition has the potential to help our economy and environment in the long run.

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ग्रामिण क्षेत्रमा रहेका दलित जनजातीहरूको आर्थिक तथा सामाजिक क्षेत्रको चौतर्फी विकासका निमित्त यस गरिवी निवारण कोष (पि.ए.एफ.) को साभेदारी सहयोगी संस्था सर्वाङ्गीण विकास अध्ययन केन्द्र (आई.आई.डी.एस.) ले गरिवी निवारण कार्यक्रम अन्तर्गत कपिलवस्तु जिल्लाका दश गा.वि.स. हरू मध्येको खुरुहुरीया गा.वि.स. पनि एउटा रहेको छ। यस गा.वि.स कपिलवस्तु जिल्लाको सदरमुकाम तौलिहवा देखी दक्षिण-पश्चिम क्षेत्रमा रहेको छ। कपिलवस्तु जिल्लाको सदरमुकाम तौलिहवादेखि करीव ५० कि.मी टाढा दक्षिण-पश्चिम क्षेत्रमा रहेको यस खुरुहुरीया गा.वि.स. मा पुग्नका लागि कृष्णनगरदेखि पश्चिम आर.टी.ओ. कच्चि सडक हुँदै यस गा.वि.स. मा पुग्न सकिन्छ। राजनैतिक रूपमा निर्वाचन क्षेत्र नं ५ मा पर्ने यस गा.वि.स. मा करिव १५ हजार भन्दा बढी जनसंख्या रहेको छ। यस क्षेत्रमा मुसलमान, कुर्मी, कोरी, लोहार, थारु, अहिर, पासी, तेली लगायत पहाडबाट बसाइँ सराई गरीआएका मगर कामी, ब्राम्हण आदी जातजातीहरूको बसोवास रहँदै आएको छ।

शिक्षाको कमी, चर्को ब्याजदर, सिंचाईको अभाव, ठुला जातजातिको हैकम र दबाव, स्वच्छ पिउने पानीबाट बन्चित, बालबिवाह, सामाजिक कुरतीका अतिरिक्त सामाजिक एवं आर्थिक अवसरबाट बन्चित महिलाहरूमाथि हुने घरेलु हिंसा, शोषण, दमन, दलित जनजातिहरू बिच विभेद जस्ता समस्याहरू यहाँका मुख्य समस्याहरू रहेका थिए। यसका साथै नेतृत्व तहमा दलित जनजातीको उपस्थिती नहुँदा उनिहरूका समस्या तथा आवाज कसैले सुन्नेसम्म गरेको पाइँदैनथ्यो जसका कारण त्यस्ता वर्गहरूको समस्या दिनानुदिन बढ्दै गइरहेका थिए। यस्ता समस्याबाट जेलिएका दलित जनजाति तथा महिलाहरूलाई यस कार्यक्रममा समाहित गर्नका लागि खुरुहुरीया गा.वि.स वार्ड नं १ जुगिनिया गाउँमा २०६४ साल आषाढ २३ गतेका दिनमा गठन गरिएको यस “शंकर सामुदायिक संस्था” २०६४ माघ ३ गते मात्र गरिवी निवारण कोषमा दर्ता गरिएको थियो। यस गाउँमा सामुदायिक संस्था गठनका विषयमा छलफल गर्न जाँदा गाउँमा रहेका दलित जनजाति तथा मुसलमान वर्गका विषेश गरि महिलाहरू कच्चि

घरको टाटीबाट प्वाल बनाई बाहिरबाट आएका मान्छेहरूलाई हेर्ने तर आफुहरू भने बाहिर निस्कन र वोल्न डराउने गर्दथे। गाउँ घरमा विशेष गरि दलित जनजाति वर्गको मान्छे भनेपछि अलि हेलाको दृष्टिले हेर्ने र उनिहरूलाई कुनै पनि सभा-सम्मेलन तथा बैठकमा बोलाउने चलन थिएन। गाउँका ठुलाबडाले जे-जस्तो निर्णय गरेपनि उनिहरू चूप लागेर बस्नुवाहेक अरु कुनै विकल्प थिएन। घरमा आफ्नो नाममा रहेको जमिनको उब्जनिबाट वर्षमा ३ देखि ६ महिना मात्र खान पुग्दथ्यो, बाँकी अवधिका लागि अर्काको घरमा गई ज्याला मजदुरी गरी परिवारलाई पाल्नु पर्ने अवस्था थियो। कसैको घरमा कोही विरामी परी औषधी उपचार गर्नु प्यो भने गाउँका साहुमहाजनको मासिक ५ देखि ३० प्रतिशत सम्मको चर्को ब्याज दरमा ऋण लिन बाध्य हुनु परेको थियो। विगतका यस्ता समस्याहरू कम गर्नका निमित्त गरिवी निवारण कार्यक्रमबाट समुदायमा आधारित कार्यक्रमको आधारमा समुदायलाई आफैँ कार्यक्रम तयार पार्न, कार्यान्वयन गर्न र त्यसको बन्दोबस्त मिलाउन सक्नेगरि संगठित तुल्याउने र निर्णय लिने अधिकार समेत प्रदान गर्दै विकास प्रक्रियाको नेतृत्वदायी भूमिका लिन उनिहरूलाई विभिन्न तालिमहरू जस्तै समुह व्यवस्थापन तालिम नेतृत्व तथा क्षमता विकास तालिम, विभिन्न व्यवसायिक बाखा, भैँसि, कुखुरा, तरकारी खेती जस्ता तालिमका अतिरिक्त, लेखा व्यवस्थापन तालिमहरूको माध्यमबाट उनिहरूलाई आत्मविश्वास र आत्मनिर्भताको भावनाबाट मात्र विकास गर्न सकिन्छ भन्ने सोचको विकास गरिएको छ।

हाल यस शंकर सामुदायिक संस्थामा १६ जना महिला र ९ जना पुरुष गरी जम्मा २५ जना सदस्य रहेका छन्। यस संस्थामा गरिवी निवारण कोषबाट आय-आर्जन क्रियाकलाप संचालन गर्नका लागि रु ५,७२,६३०/- रूपैया उपलब्ध गराईएको छ जस मध्ये घुमतिकोषमा जाने रकम रु ५,४०,०००/- मध्येबाट विभिन्न आय आर्जनका क्रियाकलापहरू जस्तै भैँसिपालनमा ८ जना, बाखापालनमा २ जना र विभिन्न ब्यापार व्यवसाय संचालनमा १५ जना सदस्य गरी जम्मा २५ जनाले आ-आफ्नो व्यवसायहरू संचालन गर्दै आएका छन्। यसले गर्दा हाल उनिहरू अर्काको घरमा गई ज्याला मजदुरी गर्नु

परेको छैन । किनकी पहिले उनिहरूमा शिप र पूँजको अभाव थियो हाल यस समस्याबाट उनिहरू मुक्त भएका छन् । भने अर्को तर्फ फजूल खर्च कटौती गरी मासिक २० देखि ३० रूपैयासम्म प्रत्येक सदस्यले बचत गर्दै आएका छन् । उक्त बचत कोषका विषयमा संस्थाका सदस्यहरूबिच छलफल गरी आवश्यकता अनुसार ऋण दिने गरेका छन् । यसबाट हाल साहुमहाजनको चर्को ब्याज दरबाट मुक्तिपाई आफु-

आफु बिचको छलफलको आधारमा ब्याज दर तोकी, भाका भित्र बुझाउने गरेका छन् ।

यस सामुदायिक संस्थाले गा.वि.स. संग समन्वय गरी गाउँमा त्यसै खालि परिराखेको



करिव २ विघा क्षेत्रफलको पोखरी मिति २०६५ साल भाद्र १५ गतेको गा.वि.स. सचिव र सामुदायिक संस्थाको अध्यक्षबिचको सम्झौता अनुसार ५ वर्षका लागि यस संस्थाको नाममा उपलब्ध गराइएको छ, जसमा हाल सामुहिक माछापालन व्यवसाय संचालन गर्दै आएका छन् । उक्त माछापालन व्यवसायबाट हालसम्म एक लाख पचास हजार रूपैयाँ यस संस्थाले मुनाफा गरिसकेको छ, जसको प्रभावबाट संस्थाका सदस्यहरूमा थप हौसला बढेको छ । त्यस्तै आर्थिक कारोवारलाई पारदर्शी बनाई सबै सदस्यहरूलाई जानकारी गराउने उद्देश्यले सार्वजनिक लेखापरिक्षण गर्ने गरिएको छ । यसलाई सदस्यहरूको आफ्नो कारोवारका बारेमा एक आपसमा छलफल हुने र समस्या समाधानका विकल्पहरूको खोजि गर्ने अवसरको रूपमा लिइएको छ ।

यस्तै गरि हाल यस संस्थाले सामुहिक रूपमा माछापालन व्यवसाय संचालन एक उदाहरणिय कार्यको रूपमा काम गर्दै आएको छ । र उक्त पोखरीलाई ब्यबस्थित बनाउनसके सिंचाईको रूपमा समेत प्रयोग गर्न सकिने देखिएकोले ग.नि.कोष का जिल्ला कार्यप्रबन्धकको अनुगमनका अवसरमा यस विषयमा छलफल गरिएको थियो । भौतिक पूर्वाधारको कार्यक्रम अन्तर्गत यस पोखरीको "Retaining Wall" निर्माणका लागि जम्मा कुल लागत रु.१८,१६,९१८/५४ मध्ये ग.नि.कोषको रु.१३,७९,४७२/६०, गा.वि.स बाट रु.७५,००००/ र

समुदायको जनश्रमदानको रु ३,६२,४४५/९४ को बजेटबाट १२० मि.लम्वाई र ३ मि. उचाईको Retaining Wall निर्माण गर्ने काम सुरु भएकोमा यस सामुदायिक संस्थाको सक्रियतामा हालसम्म करिव ७० प्रतिशत निर्माण भइसकेको छ, भने बाँकी काम यसै आषाढ मसान्तसम्म सम्पन्न गरिसक्ने लक्ष्य राखिएको छ ।

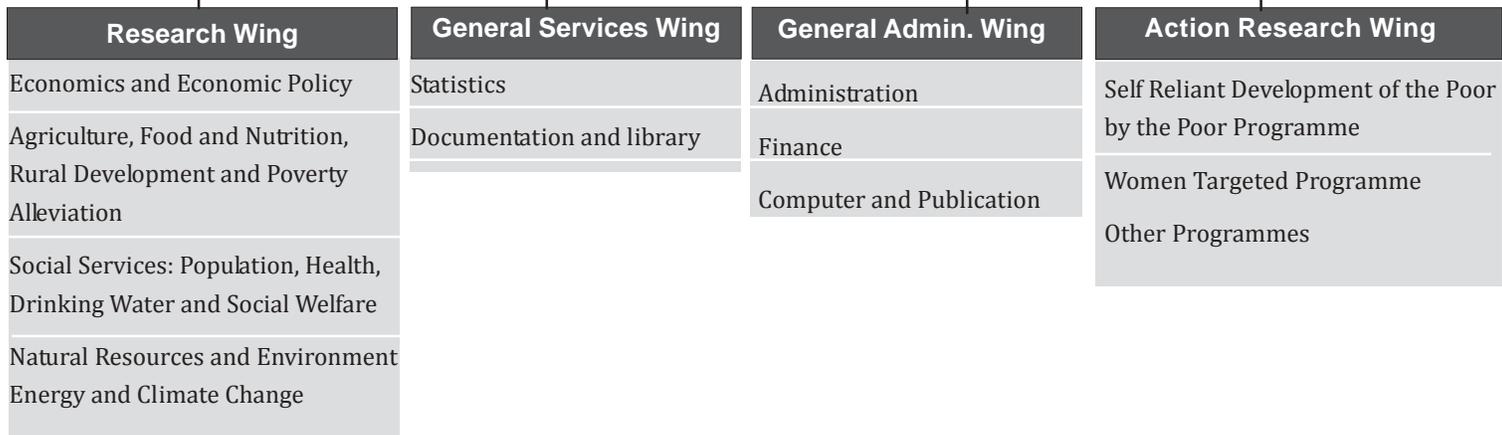
अन्तमा, यस सर्वाङ्गीण विकास अध्ययन केन्द्र (आई.आई.डी.एस.) द्वारा संचालन गरिएको गरिवी निवारण कार्यक्रमले ग्रामीण क्षेत्रमा बसोबास गर्ने लक्षित वर्गका सपाङ्ग भइकन अपाङ्गको रूपमा बाँच्नु

परेकाहरूका निमित्त उनिहरूको सहाराको रूपमा हाल जुन परिवर्तनका सुचकहरू देखिएका छन्, त्यस्ता सूचकले आगामी दिनमा ग्रामीण विकासको अवधारणालाई मुर्तरूप दिइ दलित तथा जनजातिहरू पनि समाजका विकासका बाहकको रूपमा चित्रण गर्न सक्ने अपेक्षा गरिएको छ ।

\*भलक पौडेल आई.आई.डी.एस.तौलिहवा,(कपिलवस्तु)मा कार्यक्रम सुपरभाईजरका रूपमा कार्यरत हुनुहुन्छ ।

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