

Source: My Republica, 4 April 2021

PAC asks govt to recover dues of dedicated feeders and trunk lines from industries

KATHMANDU, April 4: The parliamentary Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has directed the government to recover the dues from the industries which used electricity supplied through dedicated feeders and trunk lines after Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) failed to take action against them.

Validating the study report of its sub-committee, a PAC meeting held on Sunday asked the government to recover the dues under the headings within the next one month.

In July 2019, the PAC constituted a five member sub-committee headed by Nepali Congress leader Minendra Rijal to study the matter amid a controversy on whether it is legitimate to charge the industries with the premium charges or not. The sub-committee has sorted out Rs 14.08 billion dues of the industries for the use of dedicated feeders and trunk lines.

The state-owned utility supplied electricity to around 300 manufacturing firms under the special facility even when the country was reeling under up to 18 hours of load-shedding. The NEA had imposed 65 percent as premium charge for the users of dedicated and trunk lines.

Earlier, the NEA had sent notices repeatedly to the industrialists concerned to settle their electricity bills. Last year, a cabinet meeting even waived the premium charge for eight and a half months of the total dues in order to minimize excess financial burden on the industrialists. With the decision, the industrialists were supposed to settle the dues of only 28 months and 11 days.

However, the industrialists have been dilly-dallying to abide by the decision, arguing that it was not appropriate for the NEA to levy additional fees even after the power utility announced the end of load-shedding in 2016.

Source: My Republica, 8 April 2021

Upper Tamakoshi Hydroelectric Project set to start producing electricity from mid-May

KATHMANDU, April 8: The Upper Tamakoshi Hydroelectric Project is all set to go into the testing of electricity production in the next two weeks with the project reaching near the final stage of construction work.

According to Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), the project is targeted to complete construction by April 23. “The main tunnel and penstock pipe of the power plant will be filled with water on April 24 for the trial production if everything goes as planned,” said NEA’s executive director Hitendra Dev Shakya.

Currently, the work of installing a penstock pipe that connects the lower tunnel and the upper tunnel of the power house is underway. The contractor of the Lot-2 hydro mechanical work is reported to be completing its work by April 19. Following the completion of the hydro mechanical work, the project will conduct technical testing of gate, manhole and valves.

The hydroelectric project has planned to operate its underground fitted six turbines and six generators to produce electricity from the first unit by mid-May. The project consists of six units each with capacity of producing 76 MW of electricity.

The 456 MW national pride project is being constructed with domestic investment. The total cost estimated till the completion of the project will be around Rs 76 billion, according to the NEA.