

Source: Republica, June 7, 2014

Sufficient power generation must to achieve 'developing country' status: Expert

RUDRA PANGENI

KATHMANDU, June 6 : A major policy intervention would be required to start more hydropower projects in the country to achieve the required per capita electricity consumption for graduating Nepal to the league of developing countries by 2022, an energy expert said on Friday.

"Given the sluggish pace of hydropower development and slow economic growth rate, Nepal will be able to achieve the standard per capita energy consumption of 2,000 units, required to achieve the status of developing country, only in 2045," energy expert Amrit Man Nakarmi projected, presenting his working paper at a workshop on 'Electricity Demand: A total Energy Perspective' in Kathmandu on Friday.

The workshop was organized by Independent Power Producers' Association (IPPAN).

"Electricity is important for industrial growth and other social development. We need to generate around 18,000 MW for peak hour by 2022 if we are to graduate to the group of developing countries," added Nakarmi.

At the current pace of hydropower development, Nepal will be able to generate around 1,500 MW by 2022.

Nepal's industrial growth has declined to 1.2 percent from 9 percent recorded in the 1990s when there was no power cut. At present, Nepal's per capita energy consumption stands at 93 units - the lowest in South Asia. The share of hydropower in total energy consumption stands at only 2 percent.

Nepal's investment in energy sector is also one of the lowest in the region, standing at mere 0.3 percent of GDP compared to 16 percent in Bhutan and 3.4 percent in India.

Nakarmi added that Nepal should spend at least 5 percent of GDP, or Rs 85 billion annually, to achieve the electricity requirement to meet the electricity per capita consumption target.

The expert's view comes at a time when Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) has stopped signing power purchase deals with private developers, saying that it will face energy surplus after 2017/18 when power generated by Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Project is connected to national grid.

Nakarmi also suggested to officials to put in place functional legislative, regulatory and institutional framework, integrated energy sector policy and sub-sector policies, to increase power generation.

SUFFICIENT POWER GENERATION CAN REDUCE TRADE DEFICIT

Experts also said generation of an additional 700 MW of energy can reduce trade deficit by around 10 percent.

Nakarmi said electricity can replace Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) used for cooking worth Rs 20 billion, diesel worth another Rs 20 billion for generating electricity, and import of generator sets worth Rs 10 billion annually.

Total trade deficit is projected to cross Rs 500 billion this year.

Total energy supply in the country hovers around 800 MW, including imports from India. Import of fossil fuel can also be reduced by around 12 percent, according to Nakarmi.

Source: The Kathmandu Post, June 7, 2014

NEA cracks down on unpaid bills by publishing blacklist

[SANJEEV GIRI](#)

KATHMANDU, JUN 06 -

The Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) has begun cracking down on unpaid power bills by making public the names of its delinquent customers. The utility has blacklisted 33,600 subscribers who owe it a total of Rs 648.2 million.

In the first phase, the NEA published the names of 10 customers with the highest unpaid bills from the districts in the Kathmandu region. The step has rattled the NEA's subscribers enough for many of them, even those who are not on the list, to ask about settling their dues.

"The response has been encouraging. Even those people whose names have not been published are visiting the NEA office to make enquiries," said Ram Chandra Pandey, deputy managing director at the NEA's Distribution and Consumer Division. The names of the top 10 customers having the largest amount of outstanding bills in the Hetauda region will be published on Sunday, he added. The NEA has set up eight distribution regions, namely Kathmandu, Hetauda, Biratnagar, Janakpur, Pokhara, Butwal, Nepalgunj and Attariya. The blacklist includes the names of customers who have not paid their power bills since 1989 to mid-July 2013.

The roll includes customers ranging from residential consumers to industries. According to an NEA source, the blacklist includes several influential industrialists. "Influential people from the business fraternity have been making frequent rounds of the NEA," the source said. Those with large unpaid bills are asking for a mechanism to make payment in instalments, he added. "Some of the industrialists have already cleared their dues."

As per the blacklist published by the NEA, the Kathmandu region has the highest number of defaulting customers. There are 9,351 customers with dues totalling Rs 200.7 million in the Kathmandu region. The Hetauda region comes second with 6,389 customers owing Rs 150.07 million, Butwal has 4,517 customers who owe Rs 83.2 million and Biratnagar has 4,297 customers who owe Rs 75.52 million.

Similarly, there are 3,991 customers in Janakpur with bills totalling Rs 78.93 million, 2,544 customers in Nepalgunj with bills of Rs 33.19 million, 1,085 customers in Attariya with bills of Rs 14.32 million and 1,486 customers in Pokhara who owe Rs 12.14 million. The notice published by the NEA says that the electricity connection of the blacklisted customers and their relatives will be disconnected if they fail to pay their dues within 35 days. The NEA's first warning notice was published on April 13. Subsequently, another notice containing the names of the top 10 defaulters in the Kathmandu region was published. The power utility said that 35 days after the end of the first phase of its campaign, it would publish a list of its blacklisted customers including the names of their ancestors going back two generations.

If the blacklisted customers do not pay up even after that, the NEA will request the District Development Office, Land Reform Office, District Development Committee and the Village Development Committee of the concerned customers to stop providing any kind of service until they do so.

The final step, according to the NEA, will be to start legal proceedings. "We don't like to take legal action against our customers. We want them to clear their dues," said Pandey. The NEA will publish a list of all the defaulting customers by the end of the fiscal year, he added.

Source : The Rising Nepal, June 7, 2014

Upper Trishuli hydropower provides equipments to hospital

Trishuli (Nuwakot), June 6: The Upper Trishuli 3'A' hydropower Project has donated different equipments and materials worth Rs 600,000 to the Trishuli Hospital.

The hospital is the only government hospital in the district.

The provided equipments are blood analyzer and inverter, said Ramesh Shrestha, chairman of the Hospital Users' Stakeholder Committee.

Chief District Officer (CDO) Kosh Hari Adhikari handed over the equipments to the Chief of the hospital Dr Ramesh Bikram Singh amid a function recently.

The equipments will help the patients to get check up and receive blood test reports immediate, said Dr Singh.

RSS

Source: The Kathmandu Post, June 8, 2014

Imported electricity being under-utilised

POST REPORT

ITAHARI, JUN 07 -

The country has not been able to make optimum use of 90 MW electricity imported from Kataiya Power station, India, meant for the areas east of the Koshi River.

If the entire imported electricity is consumed, load-shedding can be reduced by at least four hours a day in the region, which is facing power cuts of 12 hours a day for industries and 10 hours for households.

A "logbook" of the imported electricity shows the utilisation has been not up to the mark. It shows the imported energy was completely consumed for only one day between April 14 and May 30.

"The major problem is we cannot store the energy. If only 65MW is consumed on a given day, we can do nothing about it," said Prakash Narayan Singh, head of the grid centre.

However, sources blame the lack of coordination between the grid centre and load dispatch centres in Duhai, Sunsari, for the situation.

The grid centre used to prepare load-shedding timetable earlier, but it is now prepared by the load dispatch centre. When the grid centre was managing the load-shedding table, the consumption of the imported electricity was up to mark.

The grid centre used to inform industries about power outages over the phone, but it has stopped to do so now.

"If the load-shedding schedule is prepared by identifying areas with high demand and those with relatively lower demand, the 90MW electricity could have been fully utilised," said Rakesh Surana, coordinator of the energy sector at Morang Industries Association.

"The load pattern should be reworked to make full utilisation of energy imported from India," said Surana.

Source: Republica, June 9, 2014

MoE begins discussion to respond to India's energy cooperation proposal

RUDRA PANGENI

KATHMANDU, June 8 :Officials at the Ministry of Energy have started internal discussion to respond to the proposal on energy cooperation forwarded recently by the Indian government.

Though the officials denied divulging details of the proposal, they are hopeful that it would lead to signing of Power Trade Agreement (PTA) between the two countries.

This is the first time that the southern neighbor has communicated to Nepal formally, showing interest to forge agreement on energy cooperation or signing the much awaited PTA. MoE had received the proposal two weeks ago via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Nepal had forwarded a proposal to sign Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for PTA to India in 2010 following the secretary-level meeting of Nepal-India Joint Committee on Water Resources (JCWR) held in Pokhara. India, however, hadn't responded to the proposal.

Nepal, having abundant potential for hydropower development, is eager to sign agreement for energy trading with India as it would help the country overcome acute power crisis through energy exchange at the beginning and to earn foreign currency by selling hydropower later on.

Officials involved in the discussion describe the correspondence as a gesture from the southern neighbor for opening of doors for energy trading. They say PTA with India would help reduce the growing trade deficit with India.

India is Nepal's largest trading partner and the trade deficit with India is increasing with every passing year.

In the proposal, India has also proposed to start cooperation in the renewable energy sector.

Keshav Dhvaj Adhikari, spokesperson at the energy ministry, confirmed that they had received proposal from India. He, however, said they were yet to study the proposal.

An energy ministry official, preferring anonymity, said the proposal by India should be taken as a good gesture. He hoped that it would pave way for further bilateral agreement between the two countries.

Energy Secretary Rajendra Kishore Chhetri, who was also involved in drafting of MoU back in 2010, is leading the discussion at the ministry to prepare the document.

Khadga Bahadur Bisht, president of Independent Power Producers Association of Nepal (IPPAN), said the proposed PTA will give momentum to hydropower development in the country as several export-oriented hydropower projects are waiting for the agreement.

"Nepal-India joint company for trading electricity and a separate entity for managing cross-boarder transmission line is also needed for energy trading," Bisht suggested.

With the formation of government under Narendra Modi, India is expected to achieve rapid economic growth. To achieve growth, India will need huge amount of energy.

India has already started to import energy from Bhutan and also exports to Bangladesh.

Source: The Himalayan Times, June 10, 2014

'Clean energy village' relies on wind, solar power

ADB hands over pilot project at Dhaubadi to state-owned AEPC

HIMALAYAN NEWS SERVICE

KATHMANDU: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) handed over its pilot project on wind-solar hybrid energy system at Dhaubadi village of Nawalparasi district to the state-owned Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPC) amidst a function held here today.

A transfer document was signed by Yongping Zhai, director of the ADB's Energy Division, South Asia Department, and Ram Prasad Dhital, acting executive director of the AEPC. The transfer would come into effect on June 13.

"Wind energy is still a new concept in Nepal ... We hope the project will serve as a milestone in providing access to clean energy in rural areas," ADB's Country Director for Nepal Kenichi Yokoyama told journalists today.

The wind-solar hybrid system was installed in December 2011 under ADB's regional technical assistance (RETA) for effective development of distributed small wind power systems in Asian rural areas, for which the AEPC was the implementing agency in Nepal.

The \$3.8 million RETA was part of ADB's 'Energy For All' initiative, which supports increasing access to energy in remote rural areas.

Under the pilot project, two wind turbines that can produce 10 kilowatts (kW) of electricity and 18 solar panels that can generate two kW of electricity have been installed at Dhaubadi village, which does not have potential to generate electricity through micro-hydro projects and has limited fuel-wood resources.

These wind turbines and solar PV panels are currently serving 46 households of the village located 170 km from Kathmandu and fulfilling their per day electricity demand of 43.6 kWh.

Prior to this, the village — now dubbed Nepal's first clean energy village — was relying on firewood, kerosene and batteries to meet its energy needs. In those days, monthly energy expenses of each household in the village topped \$11 (approximately Rs 1,045). "With the installation of the new energy system, we now have to spend only around Rs 300 per month. At this cost, students now get the leverage to study till late at night and things have become much easier for the homemakers," Padam Bahadur Rana, a resident of Dhaubadi village, told the press meet.

The ADB had entered into Nepal's wind energy sector a few years ago by establishing a plant in Kagbeni. But after its failure, the ADB had kept itself at a distance from such projects.

"The success of this project has demonstrated that it is indeed viable to provide reliable energy access to rural Nepal through solar-wind hybrid systems as one of the clean energy options," said Yokoyama, adding, "The lessons learnt from this project will be very useful in scaling up the systems across Nepal, as well as in other developing member countries of ADB."

It is said Nepal has the potential to generate over 3,000 megawatts of electricity through wind power. "However, only a small percentage of this potential has been tapped due to lack of technical know-how and financial resources," said Prakash Aryal, acting manager, Wind Energy Sub-component at the APEC. The APEC has so far identified 522 isolated villages that do not have access to national grid and water resources, but have potential of generating energy through wind power.

"ADB is now supporting the government of Nepal to scale up initiatives (as in Dhaubadi village) in other rural areas of the country under its proposed South Asia Sub-regional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) power system expansion project," said ADB Director Zhai.

Source : Republica, June 10, 2014

ADB hands over hybrid wind solar energy system to government

KATHMANDU, June 9 :The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Monday handed over a hybrid wind solar energy system, that has electrified 46 households in Dhaubadi VDC of Nawalparasi district, to the government.

Now Alternative Energy Promotion Center (AEPC) will operate the first of its kind project in the country. AEPC had started the project as a pilot project with the funding of ADB.

The project is based on energy systems planning approach and has installed two sets of 5 KW wind turbines complimented by 2 KW of solar PV panels to meet the village's electricity demand of 43.6 KWh per day, a press statement issued by ADB after the handover program said. "The electricity from the mini-grid has helped the villagers in Dhaubadi to save time and money spent on their search for firewood."

The hybrid solar wind system was installed in December 2011 with an investment of US\$ 3.8 million under ADB's regional technical assistance for Effective Development of Distributed Small Wind Power Systems in Asian Rural Areas. AEPC was the implementing agency of the project.

Speaking at the handover program, Kenichi Yokoyama, ADB's Country Director for Nepal, said, "The success of this project has demonstrated that it is indeed viable to provide reliable energy access to rural Nepal through solar wind hybrid systems as one of the clean energy options."

Similarly, Yongping Zhai, director at Energy Division of ADB's South Asia Department, said ADB would now support Nepal to scale up similar initiatives in other rural areas of the country.

Source: The Kathmandu Post, June 10, 2014

Asian Dev Bank hands over wind-solar project to AEPC

POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, JUN 09 -

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Monday handed over its pilot project on wind-solar hybrid energy system to the Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPC).

Ram Prasad Dhital, acting executive director of AEPC, and Yongping Zhai, director of Energy Division at ADB's South Asia Department, signed a transfer document amid a programme in Kathmandu on Monday.

The wind-solar hybrid system was installed in Dhaubadi, Nawalparashi, in December 2011 under ADB's regional technical assistance (RETA) for Effective Development of Distributed Small Wind Power Systems in Asian Rural Areas.

The project has installed two sets of 5kW wind turbines complimented by 2kWp of solar PV panels to satisfy the local residents' electricity demand of 43.6kWh per day.

The electricity from the mini-grid has helped the locals in Dhaubadi save time money spend on their search of firewood. "The project has turned into a great support especially for the women to clear off their household activities and focus on their children's study," said Padam Rana, a local based in Dhaubadi. The RETA is part of ADB's "Energy for All" initiative that supports increasing access to energy in remote rural areas in countries like Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Maldives, besides Nepal.

Following the handover of the project, Dhital said as AEPC is mandated to promote alternative energy projects, it is ready to take the job.

On the occasion, Zhai said ADB was supporting the Nepal government to start similar initiatives in other rural areas under its proposed SASEC power system expansion project. "Under the proposed SASEC power system expansion project, the off-grid component with more than 4MW of mini hydro and 500kW mini grid based solar or solar and wind hybrid system will be added," said Zhai.

The project is providing electricity to 46 rural households of Dhaubadi. "The success of this project has demonstrated that it is indeed viable to provide reliable energy access to rural Nepal through solar-wind hybrid systems as one of the clean energy options," said ADB Country Director for Nepal Kenichi Yokoyama.

"The lessons from this project will be very useful in scaling up the systems across Nepal, as well as in other developing member countries of ADB."

Source : The Kathmandu Post, June 10, 2014

Kabeli corridor transmission line

Don't panic, NEA tells hydel projects

[BIPLAV BHATTARAI](#)

ILAM, JUN 09 -

Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) has assured the construction of the Kabeli Corridor transmission line project will complete before the completion of hydropower projects along the corridor.

The under-construction hydropower projects along the corridor include 22MW Sanima Mai Hydro and its 7MW casket project, 10MW Upper Mai project, and 15MW Hewakhola project.

Sanima Mai had recently said it would start electricity generation prior to the completion of the transmission and that it might be forced to stay idle.

Kaveli Project Chief Uddhav Lal Shrestha said the hydel projects, including Sanima, need not panic as the transmission line would complete by August 2015.

"Sanima has asked us to expedite work on the transmission line as the upcoming rainy season may obstruct work," he said.

Sanima's Managing Director Shuvarna Das Shrestha also said they were planning to speed up work ahead of the rainy season.

The transmission line will transmit electricity produced by hydropower projects based in the corridor, mainly in three districts of Mechi zone. The 90km 150MW transmission line will connect Jhapa's Damak Substation. For the purpose, 261 towers will be installed in Jhapa, Ilam and Pachthar districts.

With the construction of three hydel projects—Sanima, Uppermai and Hewakhola—nearing end, the Kabeli project is under growing pressure. While Sanima is expected to complete very soon, other two projects are expected to be completed within a year.

Shrestha of Kabeli expressed hope the project would complete in time, saying: "There are no issues related to land compensation or manpower," he said.

Currently, the project is carrying out work on laying foundation of towers on a 34km stretch between Rajduwali Substation in Godak and Jhapa's Damak Substation.

Of the 65 foundations to be dug, 13 have been completed.

Source: Republica, June 12, 2014

'Large-scale solar projects unfeasible'

RUDRA PANGENI

KATHMANDU, June 11: Experts have said the plan of installing large-scale solar plant floated by the government will not provide sustainable and affordable energy to reduce load-shedding.

They have argued that expensive per unit price, intermittent power supply, and lack of land to install solar panels will make the solar technology in larger scale, as floated by the government, unfeasible.

Khadga Bahadur Bisht, president of Independent Power Producers' Association of Nepal, said large scale solar projects will be more expensive compared to hydropower.

"Generation of 100-200 MW will not make much difference in peak hour as solar plants will supply energy only during daytime," added Bisht.

The Ministry of Energy is preparing a plan to install large scale solar plant under public private partnership model. The plant will generate around 150 MW. The ministry is preparing to demand Rs 15 billion for the project in the upcoming budget.

Referring to the proposed project, Bisht said we are shifting from the cheaper hydropower to dearer solar power or from one renewable energy to another. Bisht suggested to the government to use the money to provide incentives to private hydropower developers instead.

According to Alternative Energy Promotion Center, solar technology (without battery backup) costs Rs 300 million per megawatt. Cost of hydropower hovers around Rs 180 million per megawatt.

Energy expert Amrit Man Nakarmi said solar technology can only be a small option for the country's energy mix. "But solar energy cannot eradicate load-shedding. Also the supply will be intermittent and the price will be expensive," he said, informing that Indian state of Gujarat has been paying IRs 9 per unit to energy generated by private solar plants.

Saying that it would be inappropriate to go for large scale projects directly, Bisht suggested to the government to choose small scale projects to begin with.

The government had earlier floated a plan of installing solar power plant of one megawatt capacity to light up Singhadurbar premises. It, however, reduced the capacity to 500 KW after failing to find sufficient space to install solar panels. Experts say at least 40 ropanis of land would be required to install panels for a one megawatt solar plant.

Jagannath Shrestha, president of Centre for Energy Studies at Institute of Engineering, suggested installing solar units on rooftops of households or corporate houses in Kathmandu and urban centers instead of going for a large-scale solar project. According to Shrestha, solar energy is cheaper than energy generated by diesel-fed generators.

An incumbent secretary, who has a long experience of working with the energy ministry, said he would prefer diesel plant of 100 MW over solar plant of 200 MW to reduce load-shedding.

Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) is also preparing to install a solar plant of 20 MW capacity under the assistance of the World Bank.

Source: The Kathmandu Post, June 13, 2014

Modi reassures to help Nepal in hydropower development

[Devendra Bhattarai](#)

NEW DELHI, JUN 12 -

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reiterated that his government will help Nepal in its development agendas.

During his meeting with Nepali Congress (NC) lawmaker Amresh Kumar Singh at his official residence in 7 Race Course Road, New Delhi, on Thursday, Modi said that the Indian government is waiting to invest in projects that could help in Nepal's growth. The Indian prime minister said that his government was interested in helping Nepal develop its hydropower sector.

Prime Minister Modi has assured to offer its assistance in Nepal's hydropower sector once the development of a suitable project has been confirmed, Singh told the Post.

The NC lawmaker also requested the Indian premier to inject more aid in Nepal's development process, noting that India has been giving more priority to its other neighbours like Bhutan and Afghanistan when it came to providing development assistance. Singh said the Indian prime minister is positive about helping Nepal in its development process.

Modi has requested the political parties in Nepal to concentrate their efforts towards ending the political deadlock, and writing a new constitution. The Indian prime minister, who is flying to Bhutan on Sunday for his first official visit after being elected, also said that he was trying to visit Nepal before the Saarc summit set to take place in Kathmandu in November.