

Source: The Kathmandu Post, June 16, 2019

Province 3 to receive lion's share of energy royalties

- PRAHLAD RIJAL, Kathmandu

Province 3 will receive the highest amount of royalties collected from the energy sector in the next fiscal year as the National Natural Resources and Fiscal Commission has set the formula for royalty sharing of natural resources among three tiers of the government.

Province 3 will get an estimated Rs274.33 million in royalties.

In line with the Act for Inter-governmental Fiscal Arrangement, the federal government receives 50 percent of the royalties from hydropower while the provincial and local governments receive 25 percent each.

Out of the funds set aside for the local governments, the commission has fixed the hydropower royalty sharing mechanism, taking into consideration the project location (50 percent), affected areas (25 percent) and affected population (25 percent).

“It means the areas or villages where power plants are located will benefit most by the royalty sharing policy, followed by project affected locations and the population in the region,” said Gopi Krishna Khanal, joint secretary and spokesperson of the commission.

“The benefit sharing formula will help provincial governments and local governments to estimate their share of energy royalties collected during the current fiscal and prepare their budget for the next fiscal accordingly.”

However, in the formula, the commission has not accounted the geographic areas or population affected by transmission lines. The number of affected local units is based on those which are affected by power generation in their region.

For instance, a local level where the river flow has declined because of the power plant located in the adjacent local level is deemed fit to receive its share of royalties. But local levels through which transmission lines pass have not been accounted for as an affected area.

According to Khanal, the commission will revise its royalty sharing mechanism to include local levels affected by power lines in the upcoming years when the country sees increased power generation and substantial impact caused by transmission networks.

“For now we have excluded the transmission lines from the equation because of lack of adequate study on that front. But we will revise these policies again in the coming years,” said Khanal.

As per estimates, in the fiscal year 2019-20, the provinces will receive a total of Rs538.19 million in energy royalties under the new and formalised benefit-sharing policy.

The estimates suggest that Province 3 will receive the most from hydropower royalty followed by Province 5 which will receive Rs183.13 million.

Each year, the Nepal Electricity Authority collects massive amount in energy royalties from the hydel plants that are in operation. In fiscal year 2017-18 the state owned power utility had collected Rs 967.37 million and in the current fiscal year the projections are at Rs 1,351 million as energy royalties.

Depending on the generation capacity and years in operation, hydropower plants have been mandated by the Hydropower Development Policy, 2001 to pay annual capacity and energy royalties.

Plants generating power from 1 MW to 10 MW are liable to pay Rs 100 per kW up to 15 years in operation and Rs1000 per kW after 15 years. Hydel plants with installed capacity above 10 MW to 100 MW must pay Rs 150 per kW up to 15 years and Rs1200 after 15 years.

And the plants producing more than 100 MW of energy pay Rs 200 per kW for 15 years and Rs1500 after 15 years in annual capacity royalties.

Earlier, the National Natural Resources and Fiscal Commission was confronted with challenges on devising the royalty sharing mechanism because of differences with the local levels who demanded a fair benefit sharing mechanism.

“In line with the demands, the National Natural Resources and Fiscal Commission held rigorous consultations for six months at the central, provincial and local levels to come up with a formula for the sharing of royalties from natural resources,” said Khanal.

According to the commission, the estimates which were generated based on the formulas suggest that the government will collect Rs 4.56 billion in royalties from the natural resources and the provinces and local levels will receive around Rs 1.14 billion.

As per the law, royalties can be raised through mountaineering, hydropower, forests, mines and minerals, water and other resources.

| PIECE OF THE PIE (in million) | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| PROVINCES | ESTIMATED ROYALTIES |
| Province 1 | 16.57 |
| Province 2 | - |
| Province 3 | 274.33 |
| Gandaki | 0.09 |
| Province 5 | 183.13 |
| Karnali | 62.82 |
| Sudurpaschim | 1.22 |
| Total | 538.19 |

Source: NNRFC

Source: The Rising Nepal, June 16, 2019

Excavator used by hydropower project set on fire

Solukhumbu, June 16: An excavator being used by a hydropower project was ablaze by an unidentified group at Bhadaure, Pingla of Solu Dudhkunda municipality-11.

The machine was used for the 68-megawatt under-construction Solukhola Dudhkoshi Hydropower Project. Though the fire happened last night, the people concerned came to know about it only this morning, said District Police Office's Police Inspector Uttam Karki. Likewise, an improvised explosive device (IED) was found near the incident site, and until the filing of this report, a bomb disposal team of the Nepal Army from Itahari was on its way to the district to manage it.

Source: The Rising Nepal, June 16, 2019

Credit facilities agreement for Sanjen Khola Hydel Project

Kathmandu, June 15: Nepal Investment Bank Limited (NIBL) and the member banks have signed a credit facilities agreement of Sanjen Khola Hydropower Project.

The Sanjen Khola Hydroelectric Project is now being developed by Salasungi Power Limited, a company promoted mainly by China Harbour Engineering Company Limited (CHEC), China.

The company's Sanjen Khola Hydroelectric Project, a run-of-river project, is located in Rasuwa district, State-3 along the Sanjen Khola, the snow-fed river.

The project cost is estimated at Rs. 13.20 billion with a 70:30 debt-equity ratio financing. The consortium led by NIBL has Kumari Bank and Citizen Bank as partners with 92 per cent of the equity being held by CHEC and 8 per cent by the Nepali partners.

The project is estimated to generate 78 megawatt power with a design to discharge of 9.10 cusec per second and the Net Head of about 1,000 metres.

CHEC, one of the fortune 500 companies, is a subsidiary of China Communications Construction Company Limited having a presence in over 800 countries holding experience construction, environmental, hydraulic engineering, power plant and energy.

Source: Nepal Energy Forum, June 16, 2019

Banks reluctant to take foreign currency loans for lack of hedging solutions

Commercial banks are reluctant to take foreign currency loans as Nepal Rastra Bank has not launched hedging solutions to reduce investment risks.

Hedging is a risk management strategy used to reduce the risk due to fluctuations in the asset price. It is also a type of insurance that will cover additional liability created to any party (investor or government) due to exchange rate fluctuations.

After the hedging regulation was implemented last February, Nepal Rastra Bank had planned to launch hedging solutions. Four months have already passed since the regulation was enforced.

Laxmi Prapanna Niroula, spokesperson for the central bank, said they had started consultations with stakeholders to launch hedging solutions in the next fiscal year. "However, the hedging solution will be effective only after the country receives a credit rating from international credit rating agencies," said Niroula.

Finance Minister Yuba Raj Khatriwada had time and again stressed the need to implement a credit rating system to attract foreign investment. Niroula said that the credit rating would help to boost investor confidence in the country.

Nepal Rastra Bank has been encouraging commercial banks to obtain loans from foreign companies in a bid to ease the liquidity crunch. However, only a few banks have followed the advice due to the absence of a hedging solution, said bankers. NMB Bank has taken a Rs16 billion project loan, the largest so far,

from Netherlands Development Finance Company, a Dutch development bank. As Nepal Rastra Bank is preparing to introduce the annual monetary policy for 2019-20, bankers have urged the central bank to immediately launch hedging solutions.

Gyanendra Prasad Dhungana, president of the Nepal Bankers' Association, said the implementation of hedging solutions would encourage banks to obtain loans from foreign banks. As per the plan, the central bank will provide hedging solutions by insuring the loan amount that banks borrow in foreign currency. Dhungana said the central bank would share risks by charging an insurance premium.

The central bank has allowed Nepali banks to take loans from Indian banks and financial institutions from last December. Domestic banks will use these loans to issue credit in the tourism, agriculture and micro finance sectors.

However, domestic banks have been unable to benefit from this provision as the Indian central bank has barred Indian banks from providing loans to foreign banks. "We have asked the central bank to initiate talks with the Reserve Bank of India on the issue," said Dhungana.

Nepal Rastra Bank allows banks to take foreign currency loans equivalent to their primary capital. The association has urged the central bank to remove restrictions regarding eligible sectors when banks issue loans using funds obtained from foreign organisations.

Similarly, they have also urged the apex monetary institution to extend the time frame of such investments to up to 10 years from the existing limit of two years.

Revising the threshold of risk weighted loans, annulling the mandatory provision to maintain a capital redemption reserve by banks while issuing bonds and debentures, simplifying the transaction of government bonds and revising the

interest rate corridor are in the wish list that the association has submitted to the central bank for the upcoming monetary policy.

RAJESH KHANAL

Source: The Kathmandu Post

Source: The Himalayan Times, June 17, 2019

400 kVA Dhalkebar substation likely to begin operation by December

The much awaited 400/200-kVA high-voltage Dhalkebar substation is likely to start operations by December. Once the substation comes into operation it will be able to transmit cross-border electricity as well as strengthen the domestic distribution system.

The 400/200 kVA substation is the only substation that is being built with the sole investment of the government.

According to Kul Man Ghising, managing director of Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), after the completion of the substation, it will be able to export and import 900 megawatts of electricity to and from India.

As per NEA, construction work of the 400 kVA cross-border transmission line has already been completed and the transmission line is currently being charged. After the completion of the substation, it will be able to transmit high-voltage electricity not only across the border with India but also for domestic consumption.

“After completion of 456MW Upper Tamakoshi hydropower project, Nepal will have surplus electricity and the Dhalkebar substation will help in the import and export of electricity with India and also open the way for energy banking with the southern neighbour,” Ghising further said.

During his site visit to the substation in Dhalkebar on Saturday, Ghising directed Bajra Bhusan Chaudhary, deputy managing director and also the chief of transmission directorate of NEA, to complete the project within the stipulated timeframe.

As per NEA, the contractor company has completed almost 95 per cent of engineering works, 60 per cent works of installing generation and supply works, and 40 per cent of installation and civil works so far.

Moreover, NEA is also constructing 400/220 kVA substations each in Hetauda of Makawanpur and Duhabi of Sunsari, with the aim to strengthen domestic demand and supply and to export electricity to India.

According to NEA, as the power utility did not receive permission from the District Forest Office (DFO), Saptari to cut trees along the route of the double-circuit 400 kVA Hetauda-Dhalkebar-Duhabi transmission line, the construction works had been halted for a few months. “A Cabinet meeting on May 28 had allowed NEA to cut trees along the route of the transmission line but Dharendra Pratap Singh, head of the DFO in Saptari intentionally halted the construction works,” said Ghising.

Source: The Rising Nepal, June 17, 2019

Construction of Khanikhola hydel project reaches final stage

Dolakha, June 17: Construction of the Khanikhola-1 hydropower project has reached the final stage.

Almost 85 per cent work of the 40-megawatt hydropower project located at Marbu of Gaurishankhar Rural Municipality has completed.

Green Life Hydropower Limited has been developing the Hydroelectric Project for the last 10 years.

In 10 years, the construction company has completed construction of 1955 metres Head Race Tunnel, 280 metres vertical tunnel and 700 metres penstock pipe.

Three turbines will be installed for generating 40 megawatt power from the project, according to Kesang Lama, director of the Green Life Hydropower Limited.

“Work is going on to generate around 25 MW power through the two turbines installed at the Chhokum Khola and 15 MW from a turbine installed at the Hanup Khola,” he said.

Nearly 80 per cent construction work of the intake located at an altitude of 3,300 metres has been completed so far, he said.

Managing Director of contractor company Echo Infra Builders Tashi Lama said that hydro mechanical work has reached the final stage and the electromechanical work in the underground power house has already begun.

He said that the work of transmission lines from the power house to Singati Sub-Station will complete in next three months. The project cost is expected to reach Rs. 6.5 billion by the time its construction completes.

In the leadership of Prime Commercial Bank, other banks, including Nabil Bank, Citizen Bank, Siddhartha Bank, Nepal Bank, Century Bank, Civil Bank, Nepal Investment Bank and Jyoti Bikas Bank have invested 70 per cent loan for the project.

Similarly, the hydropower company has already issued 10 per cent IPO for the project affected people and it will issue 10 per cent shares for general public soon.

The Green Life Hydropower Project had begun the work targeting to complete it in five years.

Source: The Kathmandu Post, June 18, 2019

Penstock installation completed at Upper Tamakoshi hydro project

- RAJENDRA MANANDHAR, DOLAKHA

The Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Project achieved a major breakthrough on Sunday night with the successful installation of the penstock pipes, bringing cheer to a country that has long been grappling with power shortages.

The 456 MW project located in Dolakha district in north central Nepal will be its largest hydropower plant when it opens in February next year. The plant will put Nepal in the position of a power surplus country and allow energy export.

Project officials said that it took more than seven hours to install the 73 sections with a combined weight of 27 tonnes. These immense tubes carry water from the reservoir to the turbines to generate electricity, and fitting them is one of the most challenging tasks of the project's hydro-mechanical component. With the successful installation of the penstock pipes, the project has achieved 98 percent physical progress.

The penstock pipes are made of steel and carry water under high pressure. They are a vital component of a hydroelectric facility that allows water to move to the turbine.

Ganesh Neupane, spokesperson for the project, said the project had aimed to start generating electricity by mid-November, but the deadline had to be pushed back due to the poor work executed by the hydro-mechanical contractor, Texamo Railway Engineering. The installation of the penstock pipes had been planned for 2015.

Construction work stopped for months because Texamo lacked the expertise to execute the difficult task of installing the penstock pipes. Subsequently, the project developer, Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Limited, appointed another contractor to fit the high pressure steel penstock pipes when the Indian firm abandoned the project after completing more than 95 percent of the construction work.

As delays in the execution of the hydro-mechanical component threatened to push back the completion date of the project which was already running late, the project

developer asked the Indian contractor to reassign the crucial task of installing the penstock pipes to Austrian firm Andritz Hydro.

In January, Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Limited, Texamo and Andritz signed a tripartite agreement under which the Indian firm subcontracted the task of installing the penstock pipes to the Austrian company. Immediately after signing the pact, Andritz mobilised workers at the project site and construction work resumed.

Nepal Electricity Authority Managing Director Kulman Ghising reached the project site on Sunday to witness the engineering feat. “The delay has cost us. But with today’s breakthrough, we will now be able to switch on all the turbines by the end of the next fiscal year,” said Ghising. “Other work such as welding and concrete lining of the pipes in the shaft will be expedited now.”

The project which entered the construction phase in 2012 has encountered massive cost and time overruns. The project’s price tag has swelled to Rs49 billion, excluding interest on loans, from the initial cost estimate of Rs35 billion.

Interest payments on long-term loans alone have jumped from Rs6.7 billion in 2016 to Rs14.42 billion in two years. The annual interest rate has been set at 11 percent. As of date, the total project cost including interest on loans has been estimated at Rs73 billion.

Source: My Republica, June 19, 2019

Flood causes damage to Arun Third project

RSS

KHANDBARI, June 19: Flood triggered by rain at several places of Makalu rural municipality of Sankhuwasabha district on Monday evening has caused damage to the structures of the under-construction Arun Third Hydroelectricity Project.

The flood has damaged the reservoir of the project and also washed away various machines, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Mim Bahadur Lama, said. Lama said 200 quintals of iron rods and other construction materials were washed away by flood at Makalu-5. Likewise, the flood washed away the construction materials for a bridge at Kattikeghat at Chawabensi of Khandbari municipality-10.

The flash flood has also caused landslips at various points on a three kilometers stretch of the Khandbari-Kimathanka road from Sumbhabhir to Kaptane at Chichila rural municipality-4 of the district.

A landslide triggered by rain has buried the house of one Ajit Rai at Numa of Makalu rural municipality-5. Power supply and telephone services have been disrupted in the area.

Source: the Kathmandu Post, June 20, 2019

Energy Ministry officials leave for Bangladesh to talk electricity trade

- [PRAHLAD RIJAL](#), Kathmandu

Energy Ministry officials have left for Bangladesh to hold a second round of talks with Bangladeshi authorities on electricity trade by building a dedicated transmission line through the Siliguri Corridor in India which separates Nepal and Bangladesh.

The secretary-level meeting will discuss the agenda items contained in the memorandum of understanding on Cooperation in the Field of Power Sector the two countries signed last August.

“Apart from transmission connectivity, they will discuss the possibility of trading electricity generated by Sunkoshi basin projects, particularly Sunkoshi 2 and Sunkoshi 3,” said an anonymous source at the Nepal Electricity Authority.

“Development of solar projects in Nepal with Bangladeshi investment is also on the agenda.”

The Nepali team led by Energy Secretary Dinesh Ghimire will hold discussions with Bangladeshi government officials in Cox’s Bazar.

Last December, the two countries held the first meeting of the Joint Working Group and the Joint Steering Committee which discussed facilitating power trade after bringing India on board.

The two sides are expected to update each other on the progress of the power trade deal for the 900 MW Upper Karnali being built by Indian company GMR as Bangladesh has already signed a deal with India’s NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam which will allow it to import electricity from the plant through the Indian grid.

Discussions on the transmission lines passing through the Siliguri Corridor, also known as Chicken’s Neck, have emerged in the wake of recent amendments to the cross-border energy trading regulations by India. The southern neighbour has relaxed earlier provisions and given explicit recognition to tripartite arrangements in cross-border electricity trade.

The provisions were amended partly due to the Power Trade Agreement signed between Nepal and India in 2014. In the pact, both sides had decided to adopt nondiscriminatory policies while facilitating regional energy trade.

“The Transmission Planning Agency of India in consultation with the Transmission Planning Agency of the neighbouring country shall grant access to the Participating Entities to use Cross Border Transmission Link for cross border trade of electricity,” states India’s Cross Border Trade of Electricity Regulations, 2019.

During past meetings, Nepal and Bangladesh have pledged to make their best efforts in devising such trilateral arrangements as a common agenda.

Bangladesh, one of the fastest growing economies aided by its manufacturing sector, is an energy-hungry nation which makes it a lucrative market for power produced in Nepal.

To satisfy its power demand, Bangladesh has floated plans to import around 9,000 MW from Nepal over the course of a decade.

In May, Nepali independent power producers urged the government to come up with measures to ease power trade between Nepal and Bangladesh saying that a concrete agreement would resolve market access issues currently faced by domestic producers.

They had also asked the government to table the power trade proposals of private hydropower companies at the meeting of the Joint Working Group of Bangladesh and Nepal.

“In line with the Indian government’s policy on allowing export of electricity produced in Nepal through the existing transmission lines or by developing a new dedicated system, the private hydroelectricity sector is ready to invest in building such infrastructure if there is a government-level understanding,” said the Independent Power Producers Association.

According to Kumar Pandey, vice-president of the association, Bangladesh’s current energy demand is high and power tariffs are expensive while Nepali independent power producers are struggling to tap new markets for lack of government-level agreements.

Source: The Himalayan Times, June 20, 2019

Second Nepal-Bangladesh JSC meeting begins

A two-day joint steering committee (JSC) meeting on energy cooperation between Nepal and Bangladesh kicked off in Dhaka from today.

The second JSC meeting is expected to discuss enhancing energy trade and investment between the two countries.

The second meeting between the respective authorities of the two countries is underway after Nepal and Bangladesh inked a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on energy cooperation in August last year in Kathmandu.

The first meeting was held in Nepal.

A seven-member team of the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation (MoEWRI) is participating in the JSC meeting. MoE- WRI Secretary Dinesh Kumar Ghimire is leading the Nepali delegation.

The Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources of Bangladesh is heading the delegation from Bangladesh.

Nepal and Bangladesh have been eyeing to enhance energy cooperation, especially after the Power Trade Agreement (PTA) was signed with India in 2014.

The two countries have already agreed to focus on electricity generation, development of hydroelectricity, cross-border transmission lines, development of efficient human resources in the hydroelectric sector, promotion of government-to-government and private sector investments, grid connectivity, power efficiency and investment in renewable energy, among others.

“These are the issues that will be discussed in the meeting,” informed Prabin Aryal, joint secretary at the ministry.

Aryal further informed that the meeting will look into ways of capitalising on plans and provisions of the bilateral understanding on energy trade and investment. According to

the ministry, the meeting will discuss ways to enhance cross-border energy cooperation and promote investment in the hydropower sector of the two nations.

Following the MoU, a secretary-level JSC and joint secretary-level joint working group (JWG) had been formed to capitalise on the provisions.

As per the agreement, these committees will have to meet every year and discuss and take forward the issues related to cooperation in the power sector between the two nations.

As per Aryal, the main agenda of the meeting will be to discuss a dedicated high voltage double circuit transmission line that will need to be installed to supply Nepal's electricity through India to Bangladesh.

The Bangladeshi government has already committed to buy 500 megawatts of energy produced by the Upper Karnali hydropower project, which is being developed by India-based GMR. Moreover, Bangladesh has expressed interest to buy 9,000 MW of electricity from Nepal by 2040.

Source: The Himalayan Times, June 20, 2019

'Action on dedicated feeder only after probe report'

The government has said it will take necessary action against industries that have not cleared their dues for dedicated feeder only after probe report has been finalised.

Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), on May 6, had announced that industries being supplied electricity through the dedicated trunk line would be charged an extra 65 per cent fee for the electricity consumed.

Immediately, industrialists had also declared that they would not pay the additional fees.

As the debate heated up, the issue was brought to a parliamentary committee. Thereafter, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) held several rounds of discussions with Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, Barsha Man Pun and the NEA too.

In the PAC meeting today, Pun informed that NEA is conducting a detailed investigation into the matter.

“Since the probe is underway, it might not be appropriate to comment on the matter,” he said, adding that he would gladly present the findings after the report is finalised.

He further said if the probe finds that industrialists are engaged in any wrongdoing, the government will take action against them.

Earlier, NEA had forwarded a letter to more than 250 factories that have been availing additional electricity through the trunk line asking them to pay the amount for the energy consumed by those industries since fiscal year 2016-17.

Source: The Rising Nepal, June 20, 2019

Govt should itself construct Upper Karnali hydro project: Leader Rawal

Achham, June 20 : Standing committee member of the ruling Nepal Communist Party (NCP), Bhim Rawal, has said the government should construct the Upper Karnali Hydropower Project on its own. Nepal government is capable enough to construct the project, he asserted during a programme organized by NCP Achham at Binayak in the district on Wednesday.

The GMR Company of India must not be handed over the responsibility for the construction, he underscored, pointing out the government's activeness to accomplish the project in time. The project with the capacity of producing 900 MW electricity is linked to the prosperity of Far West and Karnali States, according to him.

He also made commitment to solving people's problems.

Also speaking on the occasion, central member of the party, Sharad Singh Bhandari, viewed that the party would gradually expand its committees at rural, municipal and ward levels by working together with the people. (RSS)

Source: My Republica, June 20, 2019

41 MW to be added to national grid by mid-September

Three projects of northern Dolakha are starting commercial generation before Dashain festival

DOLAKHA, June 20: Three of six hydropower projects being developed by the private sector in northern Dolakha are starting generation before Dashain festival i.e. mid-September.

These projects will add a combined 41 MW to the national grid.

Department of Electricity Development has issued license to 21 projects in Singati and surrounding areas of northern Dolakha.

Singati Hydro Energy Pvt Ltd, which is developing Singati Hydroelectricity Project (25 MW), has said that the project would start generation by mid-September. "We will start trial production from mid-August. All the works are on the last leg," Project Engineer of Singati Hydro Energy Pvt Ltd Ramesh Subedi said.

The project is based in Siris Ghari in Kalinchowk Rural Municipality Ward 3. Waters of Sorung River is being diverted to the powerhouse through a 5,607-meter tunnel to rotate two turbines of 12.5 MW capacity each. Power generated by the project will be connected to a local substation of Nepal Electricity Authority, according to Subedi.

The project had initially expected to start generation by mid-July.

Meanwhile, another project of 11-megawatt capacity, which is under construction at Suridoban of Gaurishankar Rural Municipality-5, is starting commercial generation from mid-August. The project is being developed by Universal Power Company with an investment of Rs 2.04 billion. Project engineer Ganesh Gautam told Republica that most of the works have already been completed. "Only small workers like clearing the sites are remaining," he added.

The project will divert water of Khare River in Chankhu of Gaurishankar Rural Municipality-6 to the powerhouse through 3,325-meter penstock pipe. According to Gautam, construction of 15 pylons to evacuate power generated by the project is nearing completion.

Also nearing completion is a 5-megawatt Ghatte River Hydroelectricity Project in Marbu of Gaurishankar Rural Municipality-7. Site In-charge of the project, Om Gurung, stated that project will begin trial generation later this month. The project is being developed by Manakamana Engineering Hydropower with an investment of Rs 1.15 billion.

According to Gurung, the project will divert water from Ghatte River to the powerhouse in Thumbuphedi through a 3,200-meter penstock pipe.

Three more other hydropower projects -- Khanikhola I (40 MW), Khanikhola (30 MW) and Suri River (1 MW) -- are under construction in Gaurishankar Rural Municipality.

Though different hydropower projects are under construction in northern Dolakha, work on a substation at Singati and transmission line between Singati and Lamosanghu is moving on at snail's pace. Developers say they won't be able to evacuate power generated by their projects if the transmission line is not completed on time.

Source: My Republica, June 21, 2019

17 laborers including six Chinese trapped inside tunnel of Rasuwagadhi Hydropower Project rescued

Sanskriti Acharya

KATHMANDU, June 21: Seventeen workers trapped inside the tunnel of under-construction Rasuwagadhi Hydropower Project were rescued alive on Friday morning, some 11 hours after the incident.

They were stuck inside after the dry landslide that occurred in the construction site at 8:30 pm on Thursday blocked the entrance of the 4.18 km-long tunnel of the project in Rasuwa. "11 Nepali and six Chinese workers were rescued this morning. All of them are safe," Chief District Officer of Rasuwa Arjun Bhandari told Republica Online by phone.

All the rescued laborers were brought to the construction site office of the hydropower project. A team of 38 security personnel from the Nepal Army, Armed Police Force and Nepal Police was deployed to rescue the trapped laborers. The project is the largest among the four hydropower projects that are currently being developed by subsidiary companies of Chilime Hydropower Company.