

IN THE KNOW



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Centre for Constitutional Dialogue opens

The **Centre for Constitutional Dialogue (CCD)** was inaugurated by the Rt. Hon'ble Subash Chandra Nembang, Chairperson of the Constituent Assembly (CA) on 19 January.

The CCD established with the assistance of the **UNDP/Support to Participatory Constitution Building Project (SPCBN)** and a consortium of donors (**Denmark, Norway, DFID, Switzerland, USAID/OTI**) in close collaboration with the CA Secretariat and the civil society, will provide support to the Constitution building process in Nepal.

The CCD will serve as a resource centre and a neutral space for dialogue between members of the Constituent Assembly, and help promote the widest possible public participation in the Constitution drafting process.



Inaugurating the Centre, Mr. Nembang said, "the CCD will provide necessary advisory, communication, outreach and technical services for the Constituent Assembly Members, civil society and the general public who are interested to learn about and participate in the Constitution making process."

The Centre is governed by a national advisory board while it is open to all the Nepalese people interested in the Constitution making process. It houses a library and training facilities and also provides a venue for public lectures, seminars, orientations and workshops on matters relating to the

Constitution.

The Centre has also developed resource materials related to Constitution building in seven languages: Maithali, Bhojpuri, Tharu, Magar, Newar, Tamang and Nepali. These materials are available in audio formats for those who cannot or do not want to read.

There are in house experts as well as a roster of experts on subjects related to Constitution building if the CA members desire for professional expert advice. Half a dozen of telephone booths have been made available for the CA members to connect themselves to their constituencies. The Centre is open for 12 hours a day, from 8am-8 pm.

Updates on CCD

So far, around 200 members of the CA have visited the Centre and acquired onsite information about the facilities available. Among the visitors are;

- **Mr. Madhav Kumar Nepal, Chair of Constitutional Committee along with Maoist leader Narayan Kaji Shrestha and CPN-ML leader Chandra Prakash Mainali**
- **CA members belonging to the Committee on Determination of the Structure of the Constitutional Body, Committee on Formation of Legislative Body and Committee on Formation of Governing Body of State**

Support to the peace process in Nepal

The Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MoPR) with support from UNDP *Assistance to the Peace Process in Nepal (APPN)* project organised a one day workshop to identify the priorities of the *Nepal Peace Trust Fund (NPTF)* for 2009. The workshop also contributed towards effective communication between the Peace Fund management, donors, implementing agencies and partners, especially after the relocation of the *NPTF* to the MoPR.

The meeting further helped the MoPR to better understand the perspectives and expectations of the stakeholders of the fund. Over 80 participants from the Government Ministries, Line Agencies and Departments, UN agencies, donor representatives and Non-Governmental Organisations participated in the workshop. The outcome of the workshop will be shared in the joint



Joint Secretary of MoPR, Mr. Durga Nidhi Sharma addressing the opening session of the workshop

Government and Donor Advisory Group meeting for further review and to set the framework for *NPTF Programme* in 2009 and beyond.

Earthquake Safety Day commemorated

The eleventh earthquake safety day was celebrated on 15 January by the National Committee for *Earthquake Safety Day* under the Ministry of Home Affairs. The UNDP *Disaster Risk Reduction at the National Level in Nepal (DRRNLN II)*, a project supported by the European Commission Humanitarian Aid department (DIPECHO), provided financial assistance to the National Committee for organising two symposiums on disaster risk reduction. The purpose of these symposiums was to share the experiences and generate new ideas on disaster risk reduction and response among all the stakeholders, mainly the policymakers, decision makers, academicians, professionals and the civil society. Several awareness messages were also released through radio, television, newspapers, banners, pamphlets, posters and outreach programmes emphasizing the importance of preparedness and risk reduction.



UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Robert Piper addressing the occasion

Free, frank and non-attributable talk programme !

At the request of the Army Command and Staff College in Shivapuri (the highest training institute of the Nepalese army), a briefing session was organised by UNDP for the 15th Command Staff.

UNDP Country Director Anne-Isabelle Degryse Bateau gave a presentation on the role of UNDP in the development of Nepal and in the peace-building process, within the framework of the broader mandate of

the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the Country Cooperation Framework (CCF). She also took a number of questions from the audience.

Since 1993, the College has had the tradition of inviting scholars, subject experts and diplomats to give presentations on different subject matters related to national, regional and global issues. The sessions are taken as free, frank and



Brigadier General Narendra Bahadur Rawal briefing about the Staff College courses to UNDP Country Director Anne-Isabelle Degryse-Bateau

non-attributable talk programmes which makes them very informal and lively.

News from the field

“Power cut does not affect us, we always have electricity”

About two and a half hours drive away from Kathmandu is a peaceful village Pinthali (Mangaltar Village Development Committee) in Kavre district. All the residents are Tamangs (indigenous peoples) in this village.

Here are the excerpts of interview with Karma Dhoj Lama, the beneficiary and former Chairperson of the Community Organisation established by the community through the support of UNDP Rural Energy Development Programme in 1997;

Q. How long has it been since electricity came to your village ?

K : It has been 12 years since we got electricity with the support of the micro-hydro programme.

Q. Have you faced any difficulty in maintaining and sustaining this micro-hydro project ?

K : In the past 12 years, we rarely have had to live in dark. Sometimes, when the turbine needs to be repaired we cut the power supply for the required period of time and at times when we need to repair the irrigation system. We now have bio-

I can say we have not lived in darkness after we had electricity in our village through micro-hydro project implemented in 1998. We do not have power-cut problems like in the cities.

gas for cooking purpose that provides us with a better kitchen environment.

Q: How much do you charge for lighting to each household ?

K : Rs. 10 per bulb per month. This is a subsidized tariff, however we collect more tariff by running different other enterprises.

Q: How do you make use of the tariff ?

K : From the tariff, we collect around Rs. 5,000 to 6,000 per month from the houses. The Functional Group of micro-hydro receives money from the various end-users such as the owners of flour mill and oil expeller. From the savings and tariff collected we have fund equivalent to Rs. 15,00,000 in our Community Energy Fund (CEF), which we can use if the turbine breaks down. So we are well prepared! We started our CEF with Rs. 2,00,000 but now we are making more profit and can sustain the



system by ourselves.

Q: What has changed after the electrification of the village ?

K :Now, we constantly think about improving our livelihood. Our children are enjoying the facility of electricity to study till late hours at night. We can do additional income generating works and are better informed as we have television in our houses. Our children can use computers now.

Q: How do you think you can support this programme in the coming days?

K : I have learnt a great deal from this programme. I will work for my community to make this place better to live in the coming days. I wish for more projects like this which can utilize our own natural resources to give electricity to other dark villages of Nepal.

UN Global Compact participants in Nepal meet

A meeting was organised between the UN Global Compact participants in Nepal and Mr. Steve Killelea, the Chairman and Founder of various non-profit organisations and an accomplished entrepreneur in high technology business development (software products).

The discussion focused on the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) of business houses and the inter-linkages of economics, business and

peace. Mr. Killelea emphasized that peace is conducive to business and it is evident that business wishes to invest in areas where there is minimal violence.

27 local companies have signed up the UN Global Compact in Nepal until now. UNDP has been promoting UN Global Compact in Nepal since 2003. The UN Global Compact is a strategic policy initiative for businesses that are



Mr. Steve Killelea with UN Global Compact participants in Nepal

committed to aligning their operations and strategies with the ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. (website: <http://www.unglobalcompact.org/>)

‘Rautes’ visit capital to ensure their nomadic rights

A group of six ‘Rautes’, the nomadic tribe from the western Nepal hills, completed their week long visit to Kathmandu in early January. During their high profile tour to the capital, they met with President Ram Baran Yadav, Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal, Chairman of Constitution Assembly Subhash Nembang and Finance Minister Babu Ram Bhattarai.

The visit was supported jointly by Contemporary Vision and National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN). The UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme has supported Contemporary Vision to implement the **Conservation of Raute Culture through Livelihood Improvement** project.



‘Rautes’ meet PM Pushpa Kamal Dahal

“This capital tour has been very fruitful” said Ain Bhadr Shahi, Assistant Chieftain (Mukhiya) of the group.

After the visit, the Government increased their monthly subsistence allowance from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000 per household and assured to formulate a policy for the ‘Rautes’ to access soft wood from the forests.

The policy is expected to encourage conservation while at the same time give a source of living for the ‘Rautes.’

‘Rautes’ are the only nomadic indigenous community in the country. According to their traditional culture, they do not stay in one place nor do they send their children to school. Their own rules forbid them to practice agriculture but they make beautiful wooden utensils and furniture (bed) from light wood. As per their culture they do not sell but barter their products for food grain. As a primitive mode of life, they only hunt monkeys and do not harm any other wild animals and birds.

Bureau for Development Policy *Missions*

The newly appointed Director of the Democratic Governance Group in *Bureau for Development Policy/UNDP*, New York, Ms. Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi together with the Deputy Director, Mr. Douglas Gardner, visited UNDP Nepal to observe how the Programmes have responded to the development needs of the country and supported the Government’s agenda in partnership with the UN system, the donor community, INGOs and civil society.

While the main focus of the visit was Governance, the team was briefed about the overall UNDP programme.

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**Communications Unit
United Nations Development Programme
UN House, POB 107,
Pulchowk, Lalitpur,
Nepal
Phone: 00-977-1-5523200
Fax: 00-977-1-5523991**

We welcome any comments, suggestions and feedback at sangita.khadka@undp.org

Crisis Prevention and Recovery

The Deputy Director of *UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery/BCPR*, Mr. Stan Nkwain visited Nepal on 19 Jan to get a first hand understanding of the key issues and challenges that Nepal is facing in its peace building process. Nepal is a priority country for BCPR across the Crisis Prevention and Recovery thematic area.

The week-long mission aimed at exploring ways in which BCPR, UNDP Nepal and the donor community can best work together to be equipped to respond effectively to the evolving situation on the ground. Another major area of focus was to look at ways to strengthen natural disaster risk management– a critical agenda to protect development results.

Poverty Environment Initiative

A Poverty Environment Initiative (PEI) scoping mission (19-23 Jan) was undertaken by UNDP and UNEP Regional Offices in Bangkok to determine the need for a PEI programme in Nepal. The aim of this mission was to understand the key poverty environment-energy linkages in the country and the role of different stakeholders broadly in terms of impact on livelihood, health, well-being and vulnerability of the poor in a decentralized framework.

The mission also looked upon the key policies that have a bearing on poverty environment linkages to identify possible entry points for effective programme implementation and also the possibility of integrating this initiative into existing UNDP projects. The mission met with Government officials from different Ministries, Line Agencies, UNDP project officials followed by a group discussion on *Environment* and *Energy* sector with some academicians, civil society and the private sector.