

Clean Air News

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Locals protest to remove brick kilns

March 22.

Owing to the air pollution and road deterioration, caused by 5 brick kilns, locals of Nakhel VDC, Bhaktapur have surrounded the District Administrative Officer, Bhaktapur and Bhaktapur Metropolitan Police Office. Around 1000 people were present in the protest, carrying playcards and chanting relevant slogans.

Earlier this Friday, the locals had demonstrated a peaceful rally demanding the implementation of the agreement between the brick kiln owners and the locals. But it had resulted more in the feud between the two parties. Since then the locals have been relentlessly protesting through Nandakishor Prem Power Reform Committee. The previous understanding was that the brick

kiln owners will repair Bhatadhukur– Nakhel road stretch portion of the Arnico highway as it had been pelting locals a lot. But the agreement had been ignored by the brick kiln owners.” hence, we were compelled to revolt against the brick kilns., said Shivaraj Kasula, Chairman of the committee.

Earlier, the locals had tried to stop the transport vehicles of the brick kilns on the way, as the first phase of revolution but instead of implementing the agreement, the brick kiln owners arrested the protestors. This incident further fueled the protest and now the locals say that they won't allow the brick kilns to stay in the area. Now they have only one point demand: to remove the brick kilns from the area and not let any brick kilns establish in or

areas or the forest. However, the District Administrative Officer, Dipak Raj Nepal has been trying to hold negotiations between the Brick kiln owners and the protesting locals.



Traffic Awareness Simplified

Traffic in Nepal has always been a crucial issue with cases such as rash driving, traffic breach, accidents, et cetera being the common scenario. Taking this into consideration and with the motto 'Little things we do', United Syndicate Pvt Ltd under Vaidya's Organisation of Industries and Trading Houses (VOITH) organised their second traffic awareness programme on February 27 at Baghbazar. According to a VOITH press statement, "Around 61 driv-

ers from different areas were the active participants in the programme. They drove government or municipality vehicles, tourist buses, private vehicles and public transport." Rajesh Chandra Thakuri, Deputy Superintendent of Police, had an interaction with the drivers. The main focus of the whole event was on proper parking ideas, and to ease the misunderstanding between the traffic police and vehicle drivers. VOITH has been holding such programs

to reduce accidents and educate drivers on safe traffic rules and another such programme is scheduled for March 27.

Source: <http://www.thehimalayantimes.com>
March 03, 2011

CEN Quiz Night Raises Funds For Nilkantha

The CEN Quiz Night held on March 18, Friday in Royal Alinas Pub and Café, Lazimpat was a successful NGO charity event that integrated fun and social responsibility in promoting development works in Nilkantha, VDC. Prominent journalist Mr. Kanak Mani Dixit of Himal South Asian hosted the event and stirred laughter and fun competition among the teams who were divided into teams bearing names of the rivers of Nepal. The questions incorporated multi-media, music, and photos ranging from Nepal and international subjects.

Team Arun bagged the winning team title with team members composed of Bhusan Tuladhar, Mukesh Maharjan, Prajwol Shrestha and Laxmi Prasad

Ghimire. Mr. Michael Mc Auleffe bagged the highest bid for the auction of a Dhading handcrafted theki (a typical nepali utensil used to store various products especially Ghee and liquers), which was handedover by Mr. Bhumi Ram Nepal from Dhading. Around 65 people attended the event and raised money for Nilkantha. Nilkantha VDC is a Dalit village in north Dhading district which has not seen any 'project' in sixty years of Nepal's developmental effort. Clean Energy Nepal (CEN) has 'adopted' Nilkantha VDC and seeks to provide the residents with support for sustainable living and livelihoods. The funds raised from this event will be used to provide clean and healthy sanitation facilities in Nilkantha VDC. This event

was supported by VSBK and Royal Alinas pub and Café.



NOC To Talk Oil Pipeline With IOC

By Ram Kumar Kamat

Nepal Oil Corporation is scheduled to hold talks with Indian Oil Corporation in Mumbai tomorrow on the proposed construction of 41-km pipeline from Raxaul in India to Amlekhgunj in Nepal. The proposed 41-km pipeline project will have 39-km stretch in Nepal and two-km stretch, with pumping and equipment installations, in Indian territory. NOC Managing Director Digambar Jha, who was among the Nepali delegates during the Inter-Governmental Sub-cheaper rate. Committee, has headed for Mumbai from New Delhi to hold talks with the oil giant in India.

Jha will be accompanied by three other NOC officials. The estimated cost of the project stands at INR 1 billion, according to a survey conducted in 2009. According to Jha, IOC had agreed to fully bear the expenses for the two-km stretch, which falls in Indian territory, and NOC would bear the cost for 39-km stretch. IOC will still bear 60% of the cost.. NOC will have to use the same materials that IOC uses to build the pipeline in order to ensure uniformity. If the bilateral talks tomorrow end on the previously agreed lines, IOC will hand over the project to NOC after 5 years when it fully recovers the investment. By then NOC expects

to enhance its capability to operate and manage the pipeline. IOC has agreed, in principle, to manage the two-km stretch of the pipeline even after the project is handed over to NOC. "The demand of diesel and petrol has almost doubled in the last two years. Power deficit problem will persist for another 10 years. So, pipeline is a must," said Jha, adding the new project will end the compulsion to ferry petroleum products through a long stretch of 600-km land route. Pipeline project would also significantly reduce transportation cost and end leakage problem, enabling NOC to sell the petroleum products at cheaper rates.



Experts Discuss ABCs Of Tackling Brown Cloud

Scientists from various countries have said that the Atmospheric Brown Cloud or high level brown haze emitted from a wide range of anthropogenic and natural sources could be lowered by using technology at local levels but added that for this the governments must have a strong will power. The scientists and experts working on ABC gathered from South Asia and from around the world to participate in the Consultation on Soft Approaches for Achieving Co-benefits from Black Carbon Emissions Reductions, organized by UNEP in coordination with ICIMOD and SIDA. "Due to the huge amount of biomass burning while cooking foods in rural households in the South Asian countries, the amount of black carbon is increasing in the atmosphere that has a greater impact on health of the people and is simultaneously enhancing the melting of ice or glaciers in the snow-caps of the Himalayas," said Prof Veerabhadran Ramanathan from Scripps Institute of Oceanography, University of California, at a gather-

ing of experts to discuss on brown clouds in Kathmandu. ABC, said to be one of the major agents for accelerating the melting of glaciers and ice in the Himalayas, consists of sulphate particles produced by burning fossil fuels, nitrate aerosols from vehicular emissions and black carbon from the incomplete combustion of diesel fuel and biomass burning for cooking purposes. "The black carbon particles present in ABC act as a blanket that absorbs solar radiation and produces heating effect that enhances the melting of ice in the Himalayas when accumulated on the surfaces of snow-caps," said Pradeep Mool, glacier expert at International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development. At the meeting of the scientists and experts on air pollution and climate change in Kathmandu, Surendra Shrestha, Director, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, United Nations Environment Programme, said the impact of climate change could be reduced by acting locally and using cleaner technology like cooking stoves at the local level, and there is no need to wait for the global con-

sensus for which the large gatherings are held every year aimed at reducing the level of carbon dioxide concentration -a major culprit of global warming. Research has shown that 80 per cent of the haze in South Asia is composed of man-made pollutants. "It is possible to reduce the temperature by at least 2 degrees in next centuries if the action to lower the black carbon is conducted," added Ramanathan, who has been leading the research in South Asia brown cloud for more than a decade. The brown clouds are said to be the agent for reducing the monsoon rainfall by changing the properties of cloud droplets in countries like Nepal and India. "During the four to eight months dry season of the monsoon cycle there is no rain to wash pollutants from the air that results the formation of brown haze clouds in the sky," added Mool. Also, 4th International Training School on Atmospheric Brown Clouds (ABC) was also organized to train 32 participants from Nepal and other countries. The training was held from 21st March to 26th March at Hotel Soaltee and then the hands on exercises were carried out in Nagarkot.

Traffic Congestion Easing In Capital City

Commuters seem to be getting some respite from traffic snarls, a regular feature on the streets in recent days. Metropolitan Traffic Police Division (MTPD) has introduced several measures to ease congestion on the streets, including stiff fines on faulty vehicle owners and jaywalkers, and clearing of footpaths. The public has now started noticing the difference in vehicular pressure on the road. Commoners have been admiring this new devel-

opment. Deputy Inspector General of Police, Bigyan Raj Sharma, MTPD in-charge, said professionalism, improved internal management, strong initiative to clear encroached footpaths and greenbelt area of the Ring Road, crackdown on wilful parking on the streets and pavements, action against jaywalkers who ignore overhead bridges and traffic awareness programmes had resulted in easing traffic jams. "We realised that the practice of parking

vehicles on the footpath had forced pedestrians to use the roads, causing traffic jam, so we listed this as top priority," he reasoned, adding that the problem was still bigger. DIG Sharma further said, recruitment of adequate human resources, phase-out of vehicles over 20 years old, installation of more traffic lights, construction of more overhead bridges, professional development of traffic cops, promotion of road traffic safety, construction of

Feasibility study on cards for metro rail in Kathmandu

The government is all set to start a feasibility study for a railway system in the Kathmandu Valley. The Railway Construction Project on Sunday invited expressions of interest (EoI) from interested and experienced international firms to study the viability of a mass rapid transit (MRT). The project under the Ministry of Physical Planning and Works has proposed building an underground and elevated railway system in the Valley. Global firms experienced in the field and joint ventures between international and local firms are eligible to submit EoIs. The total length of the MRT is estimated to be 75 km with 27 km of track going around the Ring Road and the rest making up eight radial lines connecting locations on the Ring Road to the centre of the city — New Road and Ratna Park. The project plans to start construction from fiscal 2012-13 and complete 50 km of track in five years. “We aim to complete the feasibility

study within one year from today,” said Ram Kumar Lamsal, joint secretary at the ministry who is also chief of the project. He added that the study would determine the type of system, the cost of the project, locations and the viability of an underground or elevated system. The project has set aside around Rs 20 million for the survey. The project office said that it would shortlist three to six potential firms after one month and ask for technical and financial proposals for the project. The deadline for submitting EoIs is April 25. As per the criteria for submitting EoIs, Nepali firms wishing to undertake the project as a joint venture should have an international firm with adequate experience in doing feasibility studies for MRT as the lead partner. Such international firms must also nominate a local agent to

represent them. The government has allocated Rs 810 million for railway construction and development of a metro system. The government has targeted building the ambitious Mechi-Mahakali and Pokhara-Kathmandu electric railways within the next 10 years. Similarly, the government plans to build a railway system in the Kathmandu Valley. Lamsal said that it might take around three months to select the consultant and start the study. The railway network proposed for the valley will target densely populated areas to provide city dwellers a better transport system and reduce traffic congestion. The project, which is soon to be upgraded to the Railway Department, is also preparing to issue a notice to do a detailed project report of the Bardibas-Simara section of the East-West Electric Railway.



Cycling For a Change

Two youths have recently completed their East-West cycling trip across Nepal.

Basanta Poudel-22 of Parbat and Khasing Chandra Rai-23 of Kathmandu have completed their long cycling trip across the nation, imparting the message of Climate Change and Environment Protection. Rai, who is a member of Nepalese Youth for Climate Action and a British Council International Climate Champion, being an ardent cyclist himself, believes that cycling is a common but significant solution to tackle both climate change and air pollution. “One of the major reasons for air pollution in



Kathmandu is vehicular pollution, which is increasing rapidly with youths prioritizing more motor bikes and scooters,” said Rai, “but if we can revolutionize cycling and start it as a trend it will better the air quality of Kathmandu.” He also added that it would be a better option for students as it will require no fuel, and save their pocket money.

Rai believes that one should enact what he says. So, instead of just projecting the idea of cycling, it should be practiced in real. Basanta Poudel, also a member of Nepalese Youth For Climate Action believes that change can be brought

about by the youths. Hence, youths should be inspired to bring about the changes. “To inspire youths throughout the nation and to bring about the change, we also gave series of lectures at different places and organized rallies, collected signatures, all to promote cycling,” said Poudel, “we were definitely able to inspire a huge number of youths and numerous school kids through this campaign.”

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Building Partnership for Clean Air

Clean Air Network Nepal (CANN) is a network of organizations and professionals involved in air quality management in Nepal. The goal of CANN is to increase the ability of professionals and other interested stakeholders to effectively address the problems of air pollution in Nepal. We encourage you to join hands with us to expand our campaign for clean and better Air.

Clean Air News is a free email publication that features news, information and events related to clean air. Clean Air News is published by Clean Air Network Nepal to highlight the activities and initiatives for clean air by CANN and its member and partners.

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Glimpses of Air Quality Monitoring Equipments



Photos by: AnjilaManandhar and Kritya Shrestha

Air quality monitoring equipments:(from left to right) Dust-track, Solar MicroTops, Weather forecasting equipment and Black Carbon measuring equipments. These equipments were brought from University of Virginia, for the 4th International Training School on ABC, organized by UNEP, ICIMOD and SIDA from 21st –26th march 2011.