

**Source: My Republica, October 3, 2020**

## **Australian company interested in developing hydropower project with more than 500 MW capacity in Nepal**

*Outgoing Australian Ambassador to Nepal, Pete Budd paid a farewell call on Energy Minister Barshaman Pun at the latter's office in Singhadurbar on Friday.*

KATHMANDU, Oct 3: Australia's Fortescue Metals Group Ltd has expressed interest in investing in a hydropower project with at least 500 megawatt capacity in Nepal.

At a virtual meeting with the officials of the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation recently, the Australian company floated a proposal to generate 500 megawatt electricity in Nepal and sell it as well.

Minister for Energy, Barshaman Pun told the outgoing Australian Ambassador to Nepal, Pete Budd on Friday that his ministry has taken the proposal positively, according to a press release issued by the minister's secretariat.

The minister said that the Nepal government welcomes Australian investment in Nepal's hydropower sector. He also thanked the Australian government for its continued assistance to Nepal's hydropower development.

A 23-member delegation under the leadership of Andrew Forrest, the chairman of Fortescue Metals Group Ltd, is arriving in Nepal on October 12 to discuss the matter, according to the minister's secretariat.

The Australian delegation, during the visit, will discuss a prospective hydropower project that it wants to develop in Nepal.

The delegation will hold meetings with President Bidya Devi Bhandari, Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, Energy Minister Pun, Foreign Minister Pradeep Kumar Gyawali and Minister for Commerce, Lekhraj Bhatta.

**Source: The Rising Nepal, October 6, 2020**

## **Construction Of Kalanga Hydropower At Final Stage, To Produce 65 MW Electricity From February**

**By Shailendra Rokaya**, Bajhang, Oct. 6: Construction of the Kalanga Hydropower, the first and the largest hydropower being built with private investment in Sudurpaschim State, has entered the final stage and the company has a plan to produce hydro-electricity from February by completing all the works within January.

Located at a remote area of Paunta of Bungal Municipality-5 in the district, construction of the Kalanga Hydropower was started on March 21, 2017 with an objective to complete the construction works within three years. However, COVID-19 pandemic affected the works and delayed its completion by four months.

Shiva Ghimire, a board member of the hydropower, said that the hydropower was being made with domestic investment and technology and that its construction works would be completed within four months.

"Over 92 per cent of the hydropower construction has been completed. We are generating 65 megawatt of electricity at Bugal area. Total capacity of the hydropower is 65.33 megawatt. We have finished the most difficult work of tunnel construction of about 3.5 kilometer, completed powerhouse construction as well as the dam," said Ghimire.

Total investment of the hydropower is Rs. 2.8 billion and of the total, 25% is invested by individuals while the rest is invested by different banks.

Some 500 people have been employed at the hydropower for construction related work.

**Source: The Rising Nepal, October 7, 2020**

## **Locals Submit 35-Point Demand Charter To Tanahun Hydro**

*Tanahun, Oct 7* : Locals of Rishing rural municipality-1, the main affected area of the Tanahun hydropower project, have submitted a 35-charter demand to the project on Tuesday. The demand charter was handed to the project to address the issues raised by the affected areas on a priority basis.

Vice-chairperson of Beltar Bachyang Gauda Community Forest Users' Committee Keshar Bahadur Thapa handed over the charter to the project's deputy director Tulasi Prasad Sapkota.

Locals have strongly demanded proper compensation to the forest group for the project cleaning up the trees of Beltar-Bachyanggauda forest. The locals also called for immediate arrangement of drinking water as the project caused total disruption of water supply from Mukurluk drinking water project in Jhaputar and Beltar areas.

Among other demands are operation of incomplete and obstructed Kisnidi Rohangside drinking water scheme, expansion of drinking water pipes in settlements and smooth water supply, routine maintenance and expansion of street lamps and control of noise pollution resulting from the project-operated crusher plants.

Implementation of 33 percent employment to the project-affected communities' people, equal treatment to the local project staffs in terms of positions, storage of timbers chopped off in the project site, arrangement of security guard in the community forest area and handing over the responsibility to the users committee for the management of trees chopped off in infrastructure development sites, among others, are included in the demand charter.

The locals also demanded framing a definite time-table for routine public hearing and interaction with project-affected sites and setup of a help desk with interpreters to listen and redress the complaints of the communities.

Among others are immediate compensation of the land acquired by the project in course of the construction of road to project quarter area, implementation of tripartite agreement for the construction of sports ground and shutdown of extraction of river materials from Seti River banks with the use of big machines against environmental standards.

Receiving the demand charter, project's social protection expert Dilliraman Dhakal assured the locals of addressing the issues one after another. He pledged to grant prerogative rights to Rishing, Byas, Myagde and Bhimad of the district.

**Source: The Himalayan Times, October 7, 2020**

## **Entrepreneurs welcome VAT exemption on penstock pipes**

The government's decision to exempt value added tax (VAT) on the import of iron or steel sheet used in making penstock pipes to be used in hydropower projects has brought cheer to the entrepreneurs in the country.

The iron or steel sheets are used in making penstock pipes that are used for building tunnels in the hydropower projects.

The entrepreneurs who had invested in hydropower projects and those mulling to invest in the sector have been elated.

The Independent Power Producers Association, Nepal (IPPAN) President Krishna Acharya said that the energy entrepreneurs had also demanded with the government to consider exemption of VAT or any other charges on iron and steel sheets used in hydropower projects.

“Although the budget for the current fiscal year 2020- 21 did not incorporate these demands, we are happy that the government decided to exempt VAT on iron or steel sheets used in penstock pipes for hydropower projects,” he said.

Acharya added the government's latest decision has provided relief to the energy entrepreneurs to some extent and expressed belief that this move will help in fulfilling the government's target of producing 15,000 megawatts of power in 10 years.

Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation Barshaman Pun had announced during discussions on the Appropriation Bill in the Parliament on June 9 that the customs duty on the steel plates used in hydroelectricity projects would be revised.

The government has also reduced the tax on electric vehicles that it had increased lately. This move is expected to boost the appeal of electric vehicles in the country.

A meeting of the Council of Ministers on October 1 had decided to decrease the excise duty on electric vehicles. The automobile entrepreneurs had been

complaining about the increment in excise duty announced through the budget statement of the current fiscal year.

Traders and entrepreneurs say that the price of electric vehicles had almost doubled with the increment in excise duty and around 500 electric vehicles are stuck at the customs points due to the increased tax.

Meanwhile, the government has prepared to operate nearly 300 electric buses in Kathmandu valley. Similarly, the Bagmati state government has brought the policy of promoting electric vehicles in the province.

**Source: The Rising Nepal, October 8, 2020**

## **106 Megawatt Of Electricity Being Generated From Kulekhani Hydel To Be Continued**

Makawanpur, Oct. 8: The Kulekhani Hydro Power Project (hydel) I at Makwanpur district has decided to give continuity to the generation of 106 megawatt of electricity that was being produced on a daily basis.

The Hydel Project Office Chief Dharendra Chaudhary shared that move was made after the instruction of the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) which aims to ensure smooth supply of the electricity during the upcoming festival time.

During the festival time, the consumption of electricity is higher. With the continuation of electricity production, the NEA could produce power in full capacity so as to ensure regular supply of the electricity which could get interrupted due to bad weather at any moment.

The Hydel has three power production houses. The first one generates 60 megawatt of electricity, second 32 and third one 14.

The Hydel is situated at Indrasarobar Reservoir at Indrasarobar Rural Municipality in Makawanpur district.