

Source: The Kathmandu; 25 June 2017

Load-shedding in Farwest will end shortly: NEA's Ghising

Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) Managing Director Kulman Ghising has assured that ongoing load-shedding in the Farwest would end within a few days.

Ghising told former prime minister and CPN (Maoist Centre) Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal that the load-shedding in the region would end in a couple of days once the maintenance of transmitters and transformers are completed, according to Dahal's secretariat.

The former PM had invited Ghising at his residence in Lazimpat on Saturday to discuss about the problem after he received dozens of complaints about load-shedding during his recent trip to Kanchanpur on election campaign.

He urged the NEA chief to do the needful to rid the far-western region of load-shedding, saying that the people have been suffering because of the frequent power cuts.

During an address, Dahal had committed to the people in the Farwest that he would take initiatives to end the power cuts as soon as he reaches Kathmandu.

Source: The Kathmandu; 25 June 2017

Repair work on Upper Trishuli 3A at final stage

Work on the access road leading to the Upper Trishuli 3A Hydropower Project is at the final stage and is expected to be completed within a couple of weeks

A Nepal Army team deployed to repair various sections of the access road has already completed the widening of the road and is currently busy constructing retention walls at both sides of the road. According to the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA)—the owner of the project, they army will complete the construction within a couple of weeks. “Currently, the Nepal Army is constructing the retention wall at both sides of the road so that it becomes durable,” said Ambikesh Jha, the site in-charge of the project. “As the topography of the area is very fragile, construction of the retention wall at both sides of the road is necessary.”

A technical team of the Nepal Army consisting of a few dozen army personnel was assigned to repair the access road and build protection on either side of the plant’s dam after it was damaged by the 2015 earthquake.

Similarly, repair work of the landslide affected areas near the sideways of the dam has also gathered momentum. Earthquake triggered landslides also affected areas close to both sides of the dam, posing a threat to its safety. The army team has almost completed shotcreting the hill that lies on the right-side of the dam. “The army has said they will complete the shotcreting by the end of the week,” said Jha. Shotcreting is the process of spraying concrete throughout the surface of the hills to reinforce it against landslides. However, in order to prevent landslides from the hill on the left side of the dam, the army is installing netting and fencing the area with special types of wires. “We have been informed that the army has already begun the procurement process of the materials required for netting and fencing,” Jha said.

The 60 MW hydropower project is located in Rasuwa and Nuwakot districts in the north of Kathmandu. China Gezhouba Group Company (CGGC), the contractor for the project, had stopped construction work after the crucial access road connecting the headworks and the powerhouse was damaged by the earthquake.

The contractor has also demanded mitigation of landslides on both sides of the dam, saying that they would pose serious threat to the hydro project. Although the project contractor was supposed to build the access road for the project, differences emerged over who should repair it.

The dispute was settled after the consultant for the project and an independent team of experts submitted a report stating the damaged access road should be rebuilt by the NEA. An NEA board meeting then requested the government to mobilise Nepalese Army personnel to repair the road.

Subsequently in the beginning of January, a Cabinet meeting directed the army to repair the road and mitigate landslides. The army team started work in February.

Source: The Himalayan Times/My Republica; 27 June 2017

13 hydel companies in preparation to launch IPO

Various 13 hydro-power companies are going to launch their Initial Public Offerings (IPO).

Of the 19 companies of different sectors that had applied to the Security Board of Nepal for IPO and Follow on Public Offer (FPO), 13 companies belong to hydro-power.

The IPO will be allotted for locally affected people and general people. The face value of each unit of IPO share has been valued at Rs 100.

Projects are bound to give 10 percent of the total units of share to locally affected people by law.

Of the applicants, Sanjen Hydropower Company Limited, a subsidiary company of Chilime Hydropower Company, will allot 8 million 760 thousand units of share worth Rs 876 million for employees of cooperatives that have invested in the hydro-power and members of the Provident Fund.

Likewise, Rasuwagadhi Hydropower Limited will allocate a total of Rs 16 million 421 thousands units of share worth Rs 1 billion 642 million 100 thousand for employees of the investors and members of the Provident Fund.

Aakhukhola Hydropower Company Limited will issue 800,000 units of share worth Rs 80 million for the affected local people.

Ganjyang Upatakya Hydropower Limited will allot 200,000 units of share worth Rs 20 million for the affected local people while Shuvam Power Limited will give the same units of IPO share for the affected locals.

Joshi Hydropower Development Company Limited has applied for allotting the total 371,000 units of IPO share worth 3 crores, 71 lakhs and 40 thousands for the affected locals, said the Board.

Likewise, Butwal Power Company will issue 4,081,000 units of FPO share for general people while Panchakanya Mai Hydropower Project will allot 1.1 million units of IPO share worth Rs 110 million for the affected local people.

Langsingh Buddha Power Company has applied for issuing IPO shares worth Rs 97.8 million for the affected local people.

Similarly, Unique Hydel Company will allocate shares worth Rs 55.5 million for the affected local people.

Panchankanya Hydropower Company will issue 1.1 million units of IPO share for the affected local people while Nepal Hydro Developer the total 390,000 units of IPO share.

Likewise, Radhi Vidhyut Company will allot IPO shares worth 7 crores 64 lakhs and 55 thousands for general people. RSS

Source: The Kathmandu; 29 June 2017

NEA to put power lines underground

BIBEK SUBEDI

The Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) has planned to remove overhead power lines and install an underground system in Kathmandu in order to improve electricity distribution.

In the first phase, the state-owned power utility will lay underground cables in areas served by the Maharajgunj Distribution Centre.

The Energy Ministry, which is helping the NEA in this task, has formed a high-level coordination committee under the leadership of Energy Secretary Anup Kumar Upadhyay to expedite the process.

Representatives from government agencies like the Department of Road, Nepal Telecom and Kathmandu Upatyaka Khanepani Limited have been included in the committee as their work might be affected when the scheme is implemented.

The committee will plan to ensure that roads, drinking water supply and telecommunication system are minimally affected.

“The committee has held one round of discussions,” said Kulman Ghising, managing director of the NEA who represents the power utility in the committee. “Since the project will impact the work of other government agencies, we have to be very careful when devising methods to execute it.”

The NEA aims to finalize the modality within a couple of months, and it will call for tenders from interested parties to lay underground cables. The authority is currently preparing the bid document.

The NEA has been mulling to adopt a horizontal erection gridding system to lay underground cables as less damage will be caused to roads this way.

Under this system, power lines can be laid over a distance of 100 metres by drilling a pit at one place.

Also, the road will be black topped immediately after the work is completed, according to the NEA.

The major reason behind removing the existing overhead lines and installing an underground system is to increase the reliability of the distribution system besides increasing the capacity, according to the NEA.

“Our existing distribution system is very fragile, and it can’t bear much load. Therefore, the system needs to be upgraded,” said Prabal Adhikari, spokesperson for the NEA.

The Kathmandu Valley’s existing distribution network can’t support a load of more than 400 MW.

The NEA is planning to upgrade it to be able to support up to 2,000 MW.

“In the second phase, electric wires under the Ratna Park Distribution Centre will also be replaced by underground cables, and gradually, the distribution system of the entire valley will be replaced,” said Adhikari.

Apart from laying underground power cables, the NEA is preparing to construct three 132 kV substations at Phutung, Mulpani and Chapagaun to increase the load capacity of the electricity distribution system in the Kathmandu Valley.

Source: The Kathmandu; 30 June 2017

Electricity Generation Co in line to get survey licences

BIBEK SUBEDI

The Department of Electricity Development (DoED) has recommended to the Energy Ministry to award the survey licences for four hydropower projects to newly established Electricity Generation Company.

The DoED has forwarded the applications submitted by the state-owned company to conduct surveys for the 617 MW Bheri-1, 627 MW Lower Arun, 307 MW Jagadulla Khola and 450 MW Kimanthanka Arun hydropower projects to the ministry. Electricity Generation Co had applied for the survey licences last May.

All these projects have an installed capacity of more than 100 MW, and existing laws require the Energy Ministry to award licences only with the recommendation of the DoED.

“We have found the paperwork submitted by Electricity Generation Co to be complete, and we have recommended to the ministry to issue the survey licences to it,” said Nabin Raj Singh, director general of the DoED.

Chiranjibi Chataut, joint secretary of the ministry, said they wouldn’t take much time to issue the permits to the company. “As the DoED has approved the applications, we don’t have to evaluate them further,” said Chataut.

“We will just recheck all the documents and grant the licences to the generation company soon.” Electricity Generation Co will be given a deadline of two years to complete the surveys. Earlier, the Energy Ministry had agreed in principle to award around 19 projects that are under the DoED’s basket to the generation company, and it has already informed the DoED about the decision.

Electricity Generation Co is planning to identify the projects gradually and apply for the license at the DoED.

Electricity Generation Co was established under the Company Act 2006. The company will offer 17 percent of the shares to the general public. The Energy Ministry and Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) own 20 percent and 10 percent of the company respectively.

Likewise, the Finance and Law ministries own 5 percent each, while the Employees Provident Fund and Nepal Telecom each hold 10 percent of the shares.

The Citizen Investment Trust, Hydroelectricity Investment and Development Company and Rastriya Beema Sansthan own 5 percent, 4 percent and 2 percent of the shares respectively.

Besides the general public, 10 percent of the shares in the company will be offered to locals of districts affected by hydropower projects being developed by the company, and 2 percent will be allotted to highly impoverished people.

The company has a paid-up capital of Rs300 million and an authorised capital of Rs20 billion.