

Source: The Himalayan Times; March 24, 2019

Upper Tamakoshi to start operation soon

98 per cent construction work on the project has been completed so far

Minister of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation Barshaman Pun today observed the 456-megawatt capacity Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Project.

Minister Pun arrived in Dolakha, where the national pride project is located, to take stock its progress. The minister made an on-site visit and acquired information about the progress on the under-construction project. He stayed at the project site for about three hours.

During the visit, project chief Dinesh Jung Rana and chief executive officer Bigyan Shrestha briefed the minister on the progress of the project. On the occasion, the minister directed the project officials to complete the project within the stipulated time frame.

Minister Pun expressed confidence that the project would be completed within the set deadline, reiterating that it would be brought into operation by mid-December.

“We are serious about the project as it is one of the most important projects. I have focused all my attention to completing the project on time and maintaining its quality of work. I am confident of the project’s completion within the stipulated time frame,” he said.

Minister Pun also added that the project a testimony that Nepalis themselves were capable of constructing big projects.”As per our direction, Andritz Hydro of Austria and Indian company Texamo jointly constructed two vertical tunnels. Remaining work on the project is expected to be completed by mid-November,” he said.

With problems that emerged in the course of project construction resolved, 98 per cent work on the project has been completed. Earlier, Minister Pun had directed Nepal Electricity Authority, project chief and contractors to speed up construction work.

Two companies — one from Austria and another from India — are setting up infrastructures for the construction of the project.

Source: My Republica; March 25, 2019

NEA MD to travel to Upper Tamakoshi project site every month

KATHMANDU, March 25: Managing Director of Nepal Electricity Authority Kulman Ghising will be travelling to Upper Tamakoshi project site in Dolakha every month for monitoring of the project.

Ghising said his regular visits to the project site and meeting with the officials, contractors and consultants will expedite project works. Ghising's decision has come a day after Minister for Energy, Water Resources, and Irrigation Barsaman Pun visited the project.

These site visits and meetings will support the project team in dealing with new challenges surfacing along the way, and complete works to meet the deadline, Ghising said.

During his visit to the project site on Saturday, Pun had said that they wanted to complete the project by mid-December as per the new schedule. Pun further said that he wanted the project to be completed within the given time as it was a matter of great concern for many shareholders.

General public including the project-affected locals have invested over Rs 10 billion on the project. "We had asked officials to give exact deadline last year. They had asked for two years, and it seems they were right about the timeline," Pun told a meeting of project officials and locals on Saturday. Pun said that the project had a prospect of making a big impact on the country's economy.

Source: My Republica; March 25, 2019

Compensation given for private lands for Chilime Trishuli transmission line

HIMNATH DEVKOTA

RASUWA, March 25: Land Compensation Fixation Committee in Rasuwa has distributed compensation for the private lands acquired for Chilime Trishuli 220 KVA transmission line.

This also paves way for construction of the infrastructure to evacuate power.

Twenty four families out of the total 26 affected families have received compensation amounting Rs 12.75 million, according to the Compensation Fixation Committee.

A committee meeting on Wednesday had decided to distribute the compensation. The task was completed in the last three days, according to Kedar Raj Siwal, chief of the transmission line project.

The distribution of compensation means acquisition of the right of way for the transmission line. But the project still needs to get permission to cut down trees from the community forest users' committee.

However, compensation for the lands owned by trusts is yet to be distributed.

The work of laying foundations for the transmission towers has already been started.

The 27.5-kilometer transmission line from Goljung to Mailung is of two circuits, while that from Mailung to Trishuli 3B Hub is of four circuits.

The project that spans in Rasuwa and Nuwakot districts has to cut down 3,825 trees and lay 79 towers.

Chinese contractor Pinggao Group Limited and Indian consultant Power Grid India Limited are working on the project.

The project is, however, going to miss its June-end deadline. Officials say it may take another four months to complete the project if everything went as planned.

The line can transmit up to 500 MW of electricity to Kathmandu. German Development Agency (GIZ) has provided grants and European Investment Bank has given loan for the project.

The total cost of the project is 65 million euros.

Source: My Republica; March 24, 2019

Environment for all Nepalis to invest in hydro projects enabled, assures PM Oli

KATHMANDU, March 24: Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has said that an environment where all Nepalis could consider an investment in the hydropower project has been created in the country.

PM Oli said so with special stress, speaking in the meeting of House of Representatives on Sunday on a recently launched program 'Nepal Ko Pani, Janata Ko Lagani, Harek Nepali Jala Bidyutko Share Ko Dhani (Water of Nepal for People of Nepal, Each Nepali is a shareholder of Hydropower).

The program aims to generate 3,500 megawatts of electricity by investing Rs 698.8 billion in 19 hydropower projects including the Upper Trishuli III B in Nuwakot which is being constructed by the Nepal Electricity Authority.

PM Oli said, "I have instructed the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Ministry of Irrigation to simultaneously carry on with all the projects rather than focusing on completing a single one at a time."

Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation had recently launched the programme where the PM Oli, during its inaugural, had announced that he would purchase the Initial Public Offering (IPO) of the hydropower project to be built in people's money.

Currently, the IPO of Upper Trishuli III B hydropower company has been floated in the market while PM Oli has also applied to buy 1,000 units of shares.

Although the deadline for applying for its share is tomorrow, the number of applicants willing to purchase IPO share to purchase has already exceeded by four fold than the shares.

PM Oli also shared that he had already instructed the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Ministry of Irrigation to create an environment where the Nepalis could also invest in other hydropower projects.

After the 370-mega watt-Upper Trishuli III B, IPO shares would be floated for 100-megawatts-Tamakoshi-V and 48-megawatts Bheri Babai Diversion, according to the Ministry.

Likewise, Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation Barsha Man Pun had applied for 1,000 units of shares of Upper Trishuli III B which is being developed by Trishuli Jal Bidhyut Company Limited. RSS

Source: My Republica; March 24, 2019

A year after PM's direction, Upper Tamakoshi project still uncertain

KATHMANDU, March 24: On April 11 last year, Prime Minister KP Oli had toured the project site of Upper Tamakoshi in Dolakha and ordered the project administration to complete the project on time.

The PM had asked all to work diligently, adding that his government would not give any space to those working irresponsibly or carelessly.

The PM's direction had come while the Indian contractor for electro-mechanical works was not working properly. Minister for Energy, Water Supplies and Irrigation Barshaman Pun had also accompanied the PM during the site visit of the 456 MW project that would be the largest hydropower project of the country upon completion.

About a year later on Saturday, Minister Pun repeated his tour to the project site and reiterated the PM's statement. He told the project officials to "complete the works on time," but did not give a strong deadline for completion of the project.

Pun simply said: "I believe the project shall complete by mid-December this year." Both statements on a national pride project, which would hugely spike energy generation in a country that saw severe power crisis for a decade until 2016, lacked the commitment and strength it deserved.

This also indicates uncertainty about whether the developer company would complete the project by the given time, despite PM Oli's strong directive during last year's project tour.

The developer company is bearing losses of Rs 40 million per day including revenue losses due to delays in the project completion.

Marking the anniversary of his assuming office earlier this week, Minister Pun had issued a 51-page progress report without specifying a completion date for the project. The report only mentioned that the project shall be completed by the end of next fiscal year. It means the deadline could be extended till mid-July 2020.

In January, the project administration of Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Limited had said that the project will be completed by mid-January 2020.

Minister Pun, however, claimed that he has managed to settle a difficult task of installing vertical

penstock pipes that run water to generators, by getting the Indian contractor share works with an Austrian contractor.

The project's cost which is estimated to be doubled to Rs 70 billion may see further overrun if there is no fixed deadline for completion.

Source: My Republica; March 23, 2019

Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Project to come into operation by coming Mid-December

DOLAKHA, March 23: Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, Barshaman Pun observed the 456-Megawatt capacity Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Project, a national pride project, today.

Minister Pun, who has been putting in meaningful efforts for the completion of this project, had reached Dolakha, the district where the project is located, on Friday.

The Minister made an on-site visit and acquired information about the work progress of the under-construction project including the reservoir site, tunnel, the upper penstock and lower penstock on the occasion.

He stayed at the project site for about three hours and observed the construction works with keen interest.

In course of the inspection, he said he has come to the project site along with the high officials of the Nepal Electricity Authority and the project for the project's monitoring, observation, resolving the problem and facilitation.

The Minister had taken information about the project's progress from the project chief Dinesh Jung Rana and chief executive officer Bigyan Shrestha. He stressed on the need of completing the Tamakoshi Hydroelectricity Project within the stipulated timeframe.

Talking to media persons after the observation of the project, Minister Pun expressed the determination that this national pride project would be completed within the set deadline, reiterating that it would be brought into operation by coming Mid-December.

"We have serious concern in this project as it is a very important project. I have focused all my attention to completing the project in time and maintaining its quality of work. I am confident of the project's completion within the stipulated timeframe," he said.

He added that this project proved that Nepalis are themselves capable of constructing big projects by mobilizing indigenous labour, skills and capital.

The Energy Minister described the project as an important model project of Nepal.

"There was some problem some time back due to the vertical shaft. As per our direction, Andritz Hydro of Austria and Indian company Texamo worked collectively for the construction works of two vertical tunnels. Remaining works are going on with a target of completing them by the coming mid-November," he said.

98 percent works complete

With the resolution of problems emerged during the construction, it has neared final stage. The construction is in the final phase with its 98 percent completion.

Earlier, Minister Pun had directed Nepal Electricity Authority, project chief and contractors to submit the work plan and intensify the construction.

Two companies- one from Austria and another from India- are setting up infrastructures for the construction of the project.

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Source: The Rising Nepal; March 27, 2019

19 hydro projects worth USD 10.5 billion in offer

CK Khanal/Laxman Kafle

A total of 19 hydropower projects with a total installed capacity of around 7,000 megawatt are set to be presented among investors in the upcoming Nepal Investment Summit 2019 for financing.

The government has prepared eight reservoir-based hydroelectric projects with the installed capacity of 6,093 megawatts to showcase in the summit while the private sector is showcasing 11 run-of-the-river-based hydropower projects with installed capacity of 886.83 megawatt.

The total estimated cost of entire 19 projects is USD 10.57 billion. Of the total projects, the cost of the projects being showcased by the government is USD 9.16 billion and that of private sector projects is USD 1.41 billion.

West Seti and SR6 Joint Storage Hydroelectric Project (1200 megawatt) is the largest project on the basis of installed capacity being showcased by the government in the summit. In the joint project the installed capacity of West Seti is 750 megawatt whereas that of SR6 is 450 megawatt.

The cost of the project which is located in Bajhang, Doti and Dadeldhura districts is estimated to be USD 2024.7 million. The government has kept open the possibility of developing West Seti and SR6 hydropower projects separately to generate 750 megawatt and 652 megawatt electricity respectively.

Sunkoshi II Hydroelectric Project with installed capacity 1,110 megawatt is the second largest project being showcased by the government in the investment summit. The cost of the project which will be located at Ramechhap and Sindhuli districts is USD 1,027.

Tamor Storage Hydroelectric Project with installed capacity of 756 megawatt and Lower Arun Hydroelectric Project with installed capacity 697 megawatt are other hydropower projects that will be showcased in the summit from the side of the government.

Tamor Storage Hydroelectric Project is the reservoir-based project with estimated project cost USD 1,217.4 million while Lower Arun Hydroelectric Project with estimated cost USD 1,300 is peaking storage-based project.

Other hydropower projects prepared by the IBN are SR6 Storage Hydropower Project with capacity 652 megawatt, Sunkoshi III with installed capacity of 536 megawatt and Nalsing Gad Storage Project with capacity 410 megawatt.

The Nalsing Gad Project is based in Nal Gad River, one of the tributaries of Bheri River and is located at Jajarkot district of State 6. The total cost of the project is estimated to be USD 1027 million.

The government has proposed to develop all these eight projects in public private partnership model.

Similarly, Namlan Khola Hydropower Project with installed capacity 260 megawatt is the largest hydropower project designed by the private sector to showcase in the summit.

The estimated cost of the run- of-the-river-based project located at Mugu district is USD 350 million.

Kaligandaki Gorge Hydropower Project with capacity 164 megawatt and Lower Barun Khola Hydroelectricity Project with capacity 132 megawatt are the second and third largest projects respectively prepared by the private sector.

The total cost of the Kaligandaki Gorge and Lower Barun Khola Project is estimated to be USD 269.5 million and USD 237.5 million respectively.

Likewise, the private sector is going to showcase 57.30 megawatt Myagdi Khola Hydropower Project, 53.53 megawatt's Middle Kalignadaki Hydroelectricity Project, 50 megawatt Tarap Khola Hydropower Project in the summit.

Upper Balephi Hydropower Project- 46 megawatt, Upper Chameliya- 40 megawatt, Upper Balephi 'A'- 36 megawatt, Trisuli Galchi-30 megawatt and INGWA Hydropower Project- 18 megawatt are the other projects prepared by the private sector to showcase in the summit.

Some of the projects prepared and being showcased by the government and the private sector in the summit have feasibility study report and detailed project report (DPR) in hands.

Source: The Himalayan Times; March 27, 2019

IBN to showcase 77 projects worth \$31.93 billion

• *NEPAL INVESTMENT SUMMIT*

The Investment Board Nepal (IBN) has said that it will showcase 77 different projects worth \$31.93 billion in various sectors during the Nepal Investment Summit that is scheduled to be held on March 29 and 30 in Kathmandu.

The Directive Committee of the investment summit, which is led by Finance Minister Yubaraj Khatiwada, who is also the vice chairman of IBN, has decided to showcase 50 government-owned projects and 27 other projects from private sector.

A meeting of the committee held on Monday, has calculated the value of the projects by fixing the US dollar exchange rate at Rs 110 per dollar.

Based on that rate the value of the 50 government-owned projects stands at \$28.59 billion and that of the 27 private sector-led projects stands at \$3.34 billion.

During the summit, the government will showcase 25 projects related to energy and infrastructure, 17 related to tourism and 11 projects related to the transportation sector.

Likewise, it will showcase eight projects related to agriculture, seven related to urban development and six related to industrial sector. Moreover, the government will also present three projects related to the education and health sector.

Balaram Rijyal, spokesperson for IBN, said that the government's main objective in the summit will be to demonstrate the improved business climate of the country in recent years to potential investors. "The summit will focus on transforming the political and policy stability into trust among the domestic and international business society."

As per Rijyal, the two-day conference will include discussions and deliberations that will dwell on investment opportunities in the aforementioned sectors. "Along with showcasing the 77 selected projects and the country's business environment, we will focus on insights and opinions from experts and potential investors to bring in investment for long-term sustainable development," he added.

Earlier, to make the summit a success the government had changed and amended various laws and policies related to foreign direct investment. “The government has introduced business policies and laws that are more contextual and we plan to highlight those to the international business community through the event,” Rijyal said.

The two-day event aims to bring in foreign investment in big projects thus creating a base for making the country prosperous to realise the government’s goal of ‘Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali’. As per IBN, over 600 participants from 40 countries will be taking part in summit.