



Media Consultancy Nepal

Disaster Watch - Nepal

A newsletter on disaster updates

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Earthquake shakes central Nepal

A mild earthquake measuring 5 points on the Richter scale shook Kathmandu at 3:40 pm Monday, spreading fear of aftershocks among residents. Shramthali VDC of Nuwakot district that lies 30km north to the capital was the epicenter of the earthquake, according to National Seismological Centre at the Department of Mines and Geology.

Loss of lives this monsoon

Baglung	29
Banke	28
Gulmi	19
Rautahat	12
Bajura	11
Bardia	10
Sindhuli	10
Darchula	9
Ramechhap	9
Sindhuli	10
Baitadi	8
Dang	8
Pyuthan	7
Salyan	7
Mahottari	7
Siraha	7
Kailali	6
Kaski	6
Makwanpur	6
Udayapur	5
Jajarkot	5
Kalikot	5
Arghakhachi	5
Saptari	5
Jumla	4
Surkhet	4
Jhapa	4
Chitwan	4
Morang	4
Sunsari	4
Nawalparasi	3
Rukum	3
Dhanusha	3
Achham	3
Khotang	2
Bhojpur	2
Panchthar	2
Sarlahi	2
Parsa	2
Palpa	2
Bara	2
Dhading	2
Rupendehi	2

Many people rushed out of their homes and offices as the tremors were felt for some four seconds. A couple of mild, immeasurable earthquakes were also experienced after the 5.0 Richter scale earthquakes. However, there are no chances of its going again. "No damage has been reported due to the earthquake, said Mr. Somnath Sapkota, chief of National Seismological Center." Nepal lies in the lap of the Himalayas, which is a high seismic risk zone. Due to Indian tectonic plates sliding 2m north annually, Nepal is considered an earthquake prone region.

The recent earthquakes recorded in Nepal include a 4.0 Richter scale earthquake (epicenter-Dolakha) on October 12, 4.2 Richter scale earthquakes (epicenter - Sarsing, Rasuwa) on September 7, 4.1 Richter scale earthquakes (epicenter-Jugu, Dolakha) on the same day.

(Posted on 30th October)

Landslide ravaged road hassle passengers

Thousands of bus passengers and pedestrians have been bearing insurmountable hassles each day after landslide swept away a 100-meter stretch of the Sunkoshi-Katari section of Siddhicharan Highway in Udayapur district some three months ago. The disruption on the only highway joining the remote districts of mid-eastern Nepal has also posed difficulty in the supply of daily necessities including food, clothes, kerosene and salts to Okhaldhunga, Solukhumbu, Khotang and other adjoining districts.

Locals, bus passengers and transport entrepreneurs blamed the apathy of Department of Road (DoR) for their troubles. They have alleged DoR has not heeded their problems even after repeated delegations for the same.

On July 25 this year, landslide had eroded 40-meter stretch of the road in Thanti area that lies between Lekkhani and Hardini VDC of Udayapur district.

Locals alleged that failure on the part of DoR to respond promptly resulted in damage to an additional 60-meter road stretch.

A large number of women and children traveling through the highway are forced to put their lives at risk as the authority has failed even to construct a foot trail. Eyewitnesses said a youth had fallen to his death some one month ago while crossing the steep hill there. Thanti stretches to 31 km of the 47 km long Katari-Sunkoshi section of Siddhicharan Highway. There are altogether 52 buses to ferry passengers to Thanti area while only three buses are stranded on the other side of the damaged road. This has made thousands of bus passengers walk for 16 km.

Bajhang	1
Tanahun	1
Sindhupalchowk	1
Lalitpur	1
Dadeldhura	1
Kavre	1
Mustang	1
Myagdi	1

(As of 30th October, 2007)

Major Displacements

Saptari	10000 family
Siraha	6000 family
Mahottari	3700 family
Bardiya	2500 family
Dhanusha	2050 family
Parsa	2000 family
Rupendehi	2000 family
Sunsari	1000 family
Banke	750 family

Total displacement: 48000 family

Total affected population:

Around 4 lakh 72 thousand (as of 30th October, 2007)

Sources : NRCS, Media reports/MCN

Disaster Related Reports

[Situation Report NRCS, 10th Sep](#)

[NRCS Bulletin 21st Aug, 2007](#)

[WHO SITREP \(5-19th Aug, 2007\)](#)

[OCHA Situation Report, 13th Aug](#)

[WHO SITREP \(4-12 Aug, 2007\)](#)

[Sink or Swim \(Oxfam Int\)](#)

[DM Report \(MCN\) 2006](#)

[NRCS Bulletin 29th July, 2007](#)

[Baglung Landslides Report, 2007](#)

[Flood scenario of Saptari, 2007](#)

[Report on relief, Mahottari, 2007](#)

Snapshots



Children affected by flooding in remote Western Nepal. (File Photo: Save the Children)

Besides ferrying passengers, daily necessities including food, salt, kerosene, sugar and clothes were being transported to Okhaldhunga, Khotang and Solukhumbu districts through the highway since five years ago. Currently, altogether 130 trucks are operating in Katari-Thanti section of the highway.

Transport entrepreneurs vented anger against DOR alleging that the authority had made no substantive effort to repair the road. "They [DoR officials] do not heed our problems no matter how many times we make requests to them. They are turning a deaf ear to the problems of the people," charged Tej Bahadur Sunar, a bus driver associated with the local Haleshi Transport Entrepreneurs' Association.

According to Sunar, altogether 185 buses and trucks have collected Rs 10,000 each to open a temporary path to help passengers and light vehicles cross to the other side of the damaged road.

Meanwhile, DoR said efforts are underway to construct a 15-meter high wall to facilitate the movement of vehicles. "In the beginning, we had planned to set up a 40-meter long bailey bridge. The plan was aborted halfway as landslide swept away 60-meter more of the road stretch," said Tulasi Prasad Sitaula, director general of DoR.

Sitaula claimed that vehicular movement in that road section would soon become normal once the wall construction is completed. "This, however, would be a temporary measure as the road section was badly damaged. We are currently in the process of arranging necessary budget to construct a separate road in that section," he added.

(Posted on 30th October)

Nepalese experts to learn flood defence

SciDev.Net

The UN has announced a new training programme to help five Asian countries including better plan for and cope with flood damage. The UN University launched their flood risk assessment programme on 15th October at the Asian Institute of Technology in Thailand.

Water experts and officials from China, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam will take part in a 14 week pilot programme to learn the tools and methodologies necessary to carry out realistic flood risk assessment.

The training will also cover risk assessment case studies in the participants' countries: Beijing, Kathmandu, Pampanga River Basin in the Philippines, Colombo and Hanoi.

Srikantha Herath, senior academic programme officer at the UN University, said the training will cover the use of rainfall and hydrological models to simulate the flow of water over land and in rivers, as well as the interaction that occurs during flooding.

The training will also include economic risk assessment. Flood control measures can be extremely expensive, said Herath, so it is important to work out how to minimise losses, especially if floods turn out worse than expected.

The training programme is the result of a meeting in 2003 — which gathered water experts from around Asia and the Pacific, including China, Cambodia, Fiji, India, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam — to discuss water related

Our Words

The monsoon rage is not over yet. Incidents of flood and landslides are still taking lives, dislodging people and rendering thousands into terrible ordeal. Despite of several appeals by national and international humanitarian organizations, relief supply activities are being obstructed. Intermittent protests and strikes by dissident groups throughout the country and political, ethnic interest induced unrest in Terai, are continually appeared to be the main stumbling blocks for the relief activities.

Thus, the disaster response of Nepal sound serious as the victims are deprived of basic requirements and delay in rescue operations. For instance, five hundred displaced flood victims of Kailali district are downcast with governmental and non governmental agencies as they are being deprived of water (Disaster Watch- 30th August report). Emergency relief materials are inadequate comparing with multitude of disaster victims in several districts, as media reports. The UN World Health Organization (WHO) has also stressed on increasing risk of diarrhoeal and vector borne diseases after flood situation.

The discrepancy between flood and landslides victims in terms of response and recovery can be easily noticed. Apparently, landslides areas are geographical far and remote. Moreover, the institutional strength of related organizations such as NRCS in those districts are not well enough to furnish adequate support. Thus, the landslides victims are being overlooked there. The scourge of disaster is not less for them, instead its tougher due to the irrecoverable property demolition. The magnitude of the affected population from landslide may not be as that of flood but victimized are utterly ravaged.

Nepal is on the eve of festive season. Dashain and Tihar has already knocked the door. On one

threats and possible risk studies.

Last year Thailand experienced its biggest flood in 60 years, resulting in economic losses of over US\$500 million. Thai water management officials say the country cannot properly prevent and mitigate floods as it lacks integrated flood assessment strategies. According to a senior official at Thailand's water resources department, who did not wish to be named, several agencies have been working on methods to measure precipitation and water run-off, but they have not worked together, resulting in incompatible data and preventing proper planning for floods.

"If we receive training from the countries where integrated water management has been adopted, it may help us to think better," said the official.

(Posted on 18th October)

NEPAL: Schools identified as key in earthquake preparedness

Earthquake-resistant building trainer Balkrishna Kasula is worried that thousands of schools in seismically active zones throughout the country are poorly built and vulnerable to earthquakes. For the past several decades, Kasula has been involved in rebuilding poorly built schools and houses to ensure they are more earthquake-resistant, with the aim of reducing casualties in the event of a strong earthquake.

"There is no guarantee that anyone or anything is 100 percent safe in a big magnitude earthquake, but we can at least work towards reducing the [potential] damage," Kasula told IRIN.

According to the Nepal National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET) - a major local civic group involved in earthquake disaster education and seismic risk reduction projects in Nepal - over a thousand schools in Kathmandu alone are at risk. None of the surveyed public and private school buildings complied with the prevailing seismic code, said NSET officials.

"This is really a worrisome situation given that Nepal ranks as the world's 11th earthquake risk country," said NSET engineer Ram Adhikary. He said his organisation was very alarmed to discover that most buildings were non-engineered, used traditional weak materials, had untied gable walls with heavy walls and roofs, and that most were elongated in plan. Adhikary said this was a recipe for disaster.

"Nepal has suffered at least 10 big earthquakes in the last 68 years," said Adhikary, adding that a big one was due any time now, given recent earthquake patterns. In 1934 a large earthquake killed over 17,000 people in one minute in both Nepal and the adjoining Indian state of Bihar. Most of those killed were in Kathmandu, according to NSET, which is concerned that an earthquake of similar magnitude today could kill over 100,000 people and destroy over 60 percent of the buildings in the capital alone.

"Schools... the most important focus"

In the 1988 earthquake in Udaypur District, nearly 400km southeast of Kathmandu, about 6,000 schools [CHECK FIGURE: SEEMS A LOT OF SCHOOLS FOR A MERE DISTRICT] were destroyed, but children were lucky that the earthquake took place out of school hours, NSET specialists said. Over 300,000 children had been unable to attend their schools for several months following the quake.

hand, disaster victims are starving for two square meal but on other hand rest are making merry on festivals. Disaster victims will be not in festive mood this year, but at least they should be ensured on having basic requirements: appropriate food, safe drinking water and shelter before they will be transferred into resilience mode.

Highlights

Flood hit five thousand family of Mahottari district will soon get food aid worth NRs 20 million from World Food Program. Food aid will be provided for severely ravaged 5758 family which will carry them for one month. (23rd Sep)

Transport service in Jhaukhel VDC-3 of the Changunarayan road section in Sallaghari of Bhaktapur has been closed since 15 days after landslide swept away the road. Following the halt in transport service locals of Changunarayan, Pikhel, Jhaukhel, Duwakot are forced to walk. (22nd Sep)

Advertising Association of Nepal (AAN) and Nepal Telecom (NTC) has extended the time for SMS donation for flood victims to October 17. NTC customers have to SMS 1410 to donate Rs 10 and 1450 to donate Rs 50. In the past one month 37,145 SMS were sent for Rs 10 and 10,262 SMS for Rs 50. (18th Sep)

In a bid to support disaster victims of Nepal, students of Budanilkantha School have organized an art exhibition at Nafa Gallery Kathmandu. Two hundred pictures are being exhibited with the price range NRs 200 to NRS 5000. (16th Sep)

A policeman at the Kirne Post, Surke Majhi, has gone missing in the Tamakoshi river of Sindhupalchowk district. Majhi had gone to the river to take bath at 1:30 pm on Tuesday, but never returned, DSP Surendra Mainali said. (12th Sep)

"Not all hope is lost and all we have to do is to educate people on the importance of seismically strengthened buildings and a preparedness plan," said Kasula, who, along with other trainers from NSET, has trained over 4,000 people in Nepal. However, for disaster safety experts, strengthening school buildings alone cannot help. There is a need to educate school children and teachers on how to prepare themselves, they say.

"Schools remain the most important focus for us since they serve as both shelter during earthquakes as well as a good medium through which to spread awareness," said NSET Director Ram Chandra Kandel, who explained that training and educating children on preparedness can help to disseminate information to the community. "Already, this methodology is already proving to be quite successful in mass education through school teachers and students," said Kandel.

Kandel gave a shocking scenario of what might happen if the current scale of unpreparedness were to continue. His technical team said that if the current lack of intervention-poor education on earthquakes and failure to make schools earthquake-resistant - were to persist, a major earthquake could kill or severely injure some 29,000 schoolchildren in Kathmandu and destroy over 77 percent of its schools. (Source : IRIN)

(Posted on 16th October)

Five Asian nations including Nepal to study flood, climate risks

A new U.N. course will help five Asian nations cope with a predicted worsening of floods due to climate change that may threaten cities from Beijing to Hanoi, the U.N. University said on Sunday.

Experts from China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Nepal and Sri Lanka would take part from November in a three-month course run by the U.N. University in Thailand to help map risks of downpours, rivers breaking their banks and rising sea levels. If successful, the course could be expanded to other regions.

"Catastrophic floods may become much more common," Srikantha Herath, senior academic officer at the U.N. University in Tokyo, told Reuters. "Asia suffers most from floods of all the regions and we want to prepare for what may happen." The courses, gathering two-four experts from each nation, would identify risks of floods, potential economic damage, and help work out everything from better designs for dykes to better weather forecasts and flood warnings.

Flooding linked to monsoon rains killed more than 3,000 people and affected more than 100 million people in south Asia this year with damage to property estimated in the billions of dollars, the U.N. University said. "The time to assess the risk to people and property, especially in large urban centres, and to act on that information is now," said Janos Bogardi, the vice rector of the U.N. University which groups academics around the world.

Studies by the U.N.'s climate panel, awarded the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize with former U.S. Vice President Al Gore on Friday, project more floods, more powerful storms and a rise in sea levels of up to 59 cms (two feet) this century. Among ideas are that cities should have systems that would, for instance, channel flood waters that topped dykes into low-lying parks or other areas where it would do least damage, Herath said. And a small ramp or a couple of steps up from street level around stairs down to metro stations could help protect subways. (Reuters)

(Posted on 16th October)

Tribhuvan Highway, one of the major roads linking capital with other parts of the country had damaged at the Naubise-Simbhanjyang stretch due to the landslide since Thursday. (7th Sep)

The Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers has received Rs. 500,000 from Employees' Provident Fund, for the victims of disaster. (6th Sep)

Landslides occurred at Laghuwa of Tansen-Tamghas road section has disrupted vehicular movement since Tuesday. Passengers bound for Gulmi are left stranded. (5th Sep)

74-year-old Bhim Bahadur Pakhrin of Padampokhari VDC drowned in the flooded Rapti river, Monday. The elderly man was swept away by the current while trying to cross the river. (4th Sep)

In Banke district 2,500 flood-hit locals of Holiya VDC have started coming down with many diseases as they have not been provided any relief material as yet. Locals complained that the foodstuff provided by the Red Cross Society was also inadequate. (4th Sep)

As a post flood consequence, fever patients are crammed in district hospital of Syangja. At least 60 patients of fever used to come for the checkup daily. (3rd Sep)

A landslide triggered by three days of heavy rainfall has blocked the Kusma-Baglung section of Pokhara. (1st Sep)

The cases of encephalitis and meningitis viral fever are rapid in Nepalgunj aftermath of flood and inundation. Till now four persons were died of encephalitis and more than 30 were affected. (30th Aug)

As a consequence of flood triggered circumstances, at least 60 persons are affected from viral influenza in Narayan Khola VDC-3 of Sarlahi district. (30th Aug)

Three drown to death in Achham

Three youths drowned to death in Kailash river when they were returning home from Santada VDC of Achham district after shopping for Dashain today. Two others were injured in the incident.

Reban Kumari Rawal, 15 and Kamala Rawal, 11, daughters of Padam Bahadur Rawal of Santada VDC-7, and Mata Kumari Rawal, 18, daughter of Dev Bahadur Rawal of the same place drowned to death. Amba Kumar Rawal, 16, and Bharat Rawal, 22, swam to safety but were injured.

All five were swept away while crossing the Kailash river instead of using a bridge over the river which was half a kilometer away. The dead bodies were cremated today while the injured are undergoing treatment in Santada sub health post.

(Posted on 16th October)

Saptari flood victims outraged

Flood victims of Saptari district complained here on Friday that they are not getting relief. Their complaints come at a time when authorities concerned are claiming that they have distributed relief amounting to Rs 10 million to over 4000 flood victims of 25 VDCs in Saptari district under the World Food Programme.

The flood victims, saying that they have not received relief yet, gheraoed president of the Nepal Red Cross (Saptari chapter) Jogendra Bhagat in Rajbiraj for three hours on Friday. "We have been forced to stage a demonstration as real flood victims have been deprived of relief," Karodevi Mahato of Pakari-7, one of some 2,000 flood victims of different VDCs, who arrived in Rajbiraj to stage a demonstration.

"Relief provided by the WFP has not reached the real victims due to a dispute," an official of the Saptari chapter of the Nepal Red Cross said. Former chairman of the chapter Bijayananda Jha, coordinator of the relief distribution committee Jagadish Aryal, treasurer Gajendra Kumar Singh and Danalal Yadav, accusing president Bhagat of distributing relief materials recklessly, had sent a letter to the central office of the Red Cross a week ago. The letter has accused Bhagat of objecting over the list of flood victims and not distributing relief to them.

(Posted on 13th October)

No festive mood for flood displaced

Some 200 families displaced by the recent series of floods in Kailali District are yet to return to their homes even though Dashain, greatest Nepali festival, is just a few days away. Families displaced from Bhajani, Lalbojhi and Thapapur VDCs in Kailali district, who are now sheltering in transitory camps at Mahunyal community forest near their devastated villages, have yet to overcome the effects of the flooding that took away their homes.

"Since the flood turned our land barren, we don't even have fodder for our cattle," Sagune Odh, a local farmer of Bhajani VDC-9 said. "The flood took away our fields and cultivation. Returning there is a distant prospect for us," a saddened Odh said. The locals said that although they had minor floods every year, this year's flooding was highly destructive by comparison.

According to another local, Dhan Bahadur Bohora, the flood devastated some five bighhas of land and cultivation in the villages. Meanwhile, claiming that they have requested government authorities and the political parties to look into the issue

Seven thousand residents of Kusma, district headquarter of Parwat, are suffering from water scarcity as the pipe line of main supply center was swept away by the landslide. (25th Aug)

The Thai government has extended an assistance of Rs 3.9 million for flood victims on Friday. (25th Aug)

The Women Foundation (WF) on Thursday provided shelter boxes worth Rs 10 million to 129 flood victim families of Balaha Sabhara VDC at Dahanusha. (24th Aug)

Marwadi Service Trust, Birgunj handed over relief materials worth NRs. Five lakh Rupees to NRCS Parsa chapter. (23rd Aug)

NRCS Makwanpur distributed relief materials to 16 flood displaced family of Dhiynal VDC. (23rd Aug)

All Banks and financial institutions of Chitwan together ventured to solace disaster victims and collected NRs Sixty Thousand Five Hundred. Money was handedover to NRCS Chitwan. (23rd Aug)

Five thousand houses were damaged in Bardia due to the flood of Babai and Karnali river. Out of them 144 houses were fully damaged. (22nd Aug)

Janapriya Campus of Pokhara announced free education in all faculties to the flood and landslides victims of Guaulichaur and Jaljala of Baglung district. (21st Aug)

Eighty percent of the farms in Dhanusha and Mahottari districts have been washed off by flood. (20th Aug)

Hotel Association of Nepal (HAN) has provided Rs.225,525 to flood victims through Kantipur Flood victim Relief Fund. (18th Aug)

Road links between rural areas and district headquarters Gaur, Birgunj have been respectively severed in Rautahat and Parsa district. (18th Aug)

700 people are displaced from Rajapur Tapu in Bardia, fearing of flood. (17th Aug)

of their proper settlement, the displaced are at present occupying the community forest for shelter.

(Posted on 13th October)

Rain troubled festive mood

Incessant rainfall has erode festive mood ahead of this year's Dashain for villagers in Taplejung district. During this time, houses used to be coloured before start of Ghatasthapana and Navaratri in the past. But, this year people could not prepare anything for Dashain due untimely and unexpected rainfall.

One Maina Adhikari of Taplejung's Fulbari VDC said Dashain began before she could decorate the house by colouring it. "I could not collect brown and red colour soil for colouring my house due to the rainfall," she said.

Dharma Prasad Dangal of Nighuradin -1 has also similar problem. He also complained that rainfall has troubled the festive mood. He recalled that everyone in the neighbourhood had walked up to Fakmari in the past, which could not happen this year due to the rainfall.

The festive mood is nowhere at Fungling, Medibung, Agedim, Simle, Dokhu, Bahanande, Hangdewa near Taplejung. People, who used to paint their houses, could not do this time. Rukmina Dhakal of Taplejung's Khokling VDC said she could not have a feeling of Dashain for failing to paint door, windows black. Colouring house is an important part of Dashain festival, she said.

Rainfall in rural areas of Taplejung hindered their attempt to dry up of rice and preparation of beaten rice, said Ram Kumari Baral of Taplejung's Hangderwa VDC.

(Posted on 13th October)

Cantonment in danger of landslide

The site of Maoist militia camp at Khayarmara VDC-8 of Mahottari district has been in danger of landslide. The Khayarmara river abutting a hill where the camp of Ram Brikshya Memorial Brigade is located has eroded the campsite causing landslide following rainfall Tuesday.

The landslide originated from inside the storeroom of the camp, Commander of the Camp Management Department, Sudhir said. The Maoist militia said they were facing difficulties even to protect food grains and other goods in the camp because of the landslide.

Similarly, a woman combatant Pabina expressed her woes that they could not sleep well as the landslide still continued. The locals said the concerned sectors should take immediate initiatives to protect the campsite where a whole brigade of the militia is stationed.

(Posted on 12th October)

Landslide buries school in Parwat

Students of Khaulalakuri proposed Higher Secondary School in Khaulalakuri VDC of the Parwat district have been forced to take their classes under the open sky these days after a landslide damaged their newly-constructed school building.

According to school management, students are being taught at the nearby

Flood of Susta river, Nawalparasi forced to displace one hundred family. (17th Aug)

Flood victims in Bardiya demonstrated in front of the Red Cross Society Thursday alleging that it was biased in distributing relief materials. (16th Aug)

Thirty thousand villagers of six villages in Rautahat are at risk due to the swollen water of Bagmati, LalBakiya and Jhanj river. (17th Aug)

Flood victims in Bardiya demonstrated in front of the Red Cross Society Thursday alleging that it was biased in distributing relief materials. (16th Aug)

Landslides induced by the continuous rainfall for two days obstructed Baitadi-Darchula stretch of Dashrath Chandra highway (15th Aug)

An engine steamer of Geruwa river of Bardia fell into the flooded water Monday. A conductor of steamer, Rajesh, went missing whereas 10 passengers were rescued. (15th Aug)

For the demand of relief materials, flood victims of Mahottari are regularly demonstrating in district head quarter Jaleswor.

32 districts of Nepal, out of 75, are affected by flood and inundation, according to the Home Ministry.

The lawmakers of Banke and Bardia, worst flood hit districts, asked the government to think about the impact of dams and barrages constructed by India along the border.

Staffers and the management of Spice Nepal Private Ltd, provider of Mero Mobile, have dispatched relief materials worth NRs. 426000 for flood victims.

Rainfall and flood destroyed seventy five percent of vegetable crops in Rupandehi.

in Mahottari, Madhesi Maitri Kendra, a civil society in the district working for the welfare of flood victims, postponed providing free-of-cost meals to victims, citing fatigues of their volunteers and lack of funds.

schoolyard as their newly-constructed school building was reduced to rubble by the landslide last month. Teachers said the landslide swept away the new building a few weeks after completion of construction work. The landslide occurred before the students got a chance to use the two classrooms. The school, running with financial support from local guardians, was also suffering from a crunch of teachers.

Local guardians say that had been putting money in the school since the last 11 years to financially back it, as it received no attention from government authorities.

However, the schools' stakeholders had been successful this year to collect Rs 440,000 in monetary support from Khaulalakuri VDC and the District Development Committee respectively.

Villagers said authorities agreed to help this time after news reports of the pitiable condition of students having to study in the open grassland were published in different media.

"But the support we got this year has also been in the vain now," Thapa said. Other locals charged that the damage occurred as experts involved in the construction work overlooked any possibility of landslide.

(Posted on 12th October)

Experts call for advanced ICT to fight disasters

Are we well prepared to deal with natural disasters? Do we have the technology required? These were questions raised at an interaction programme organized by Computer Association of Nepal (CAN) on Emergency Communication Systems, Tuesday.

Suresh Ojha CAN-USA representative and RF/Microwave R&D engineer stated that California and Kathmandu shared the same seismic history, adding it was high time caution was taken to prevent extensive casualties after an earthquake.

Even though Nepal Army does have units to deal with natural disasters in all 75 districts, the technology we use is not advanced enough to mitigate the impact substantially? stated Col. Kumar Dangol, Head at Research and Development Directorate, Army Headquarters.

CAN president Biplav Man Singh stated that active emergency communication systems in Nepal were present in dams where once the water level exceeded the acceptable level. As siren goes off, that alerts villagers and people of potential disaster like dam breakage.

We do have the technology to produce and manufacture communication systems that can be used in emergencies, said engineering students Prawish Maharjan, Basanta Joshi, Deepak Chapagain and Niraj Tamrakar who have developed a complex RF module Printed Circuit Board that is used in TVs, radios and CC-TVs.

"Information and communication technology is the most critical part of any nation's development and all political parties must treat ICT as a nervous system of any country, said Ojha.

To do this he suggested that Nepal government should develop a rational ICT policy and learn from China and India's failures; simplify visa processing for foreign ICT experts wishing to come to Nepal and make broadband internet facility universally available and cost effective. We should also improve communication systems all over the country and the general public should be

Armed Police Force (APF), Nepal handover NRs 2.5 million for disaster victims on 2nd August.

55 VDCs of Mahottari is affected from flood. Properties and infrastructures worth NRs 70 million has been lost.

Dharampur VDC of Jhapa suffered a loss of NRS 30 million.

Home minister advised the local administration to form an all sided team to carry out relief and rescue operations.

Danda dam and embankment unilaterally made by the Indian government inundated 6 VDCs of Rupandehi district.

Rainfall is significantly higher this year than 2006, according to Meteorological Forecasting Division.

Lawmakers blamed Indian dams for floods in the contiguous areas of Nepal.

informed about what to do and where to go in case of an emergency, he said.

(Posted on 10th October)

Two swept away in Sindhuli

Ganesh Bahadur Bal and Dhan Bahadur Singh were swept to death by the flashfloods of Thunawa Khola at Dandigurans VDC of Sindhuli district, Monday. Both of them were heading towards district headquarters Sindhulimadi.

Bal was a resident of Nag VDC of Sharlahi district while Singh's whereabouts is still unknown. School going children had found dead bodies lying on the bank of river.

(Posted on 10th October)

Kids Need Education To Minimize Disaster Risks

Press Release: United Nations

On the eve of the International Day for Disaster Reduction, a top United Nations official today stressed the necessity of improving children's disaster preparedness and bolstering their safety in the classroom.

"Too many children are dying because they are not educated to live with disasters or because they are attending classes in unsafe buildings. Making schools safer must be the priority of every government in a disaster-prone country," said Sálvano Briceño, Director of the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR).

"Disaster risk reduction has no cost compared to the loss of a school full of children buried alive in a mudslide or crushed by a falling building." Speaking to reporters in New York, UN Emergency Relief Coordinator John Holmes said that the Day is especially timely since "more people are threatened by these natural hazards and disasters and extreme weather events than at any time in history."

In the past three decades, the number of disasters triggered by natural hazards - increasingly a result of climate change - has tripled, he said. "The number of people affected has roughly been doubling every ten years, and that's a trend which is now accelerating, and this means in effect that five times more people are likely to be affected in any one year than a generation ago."

The ISDR today issued a new publication - entitled "Towards a Culture of Prevention: Disaster Risk Reduction Begins at School" - which gives 35 practical examples of how to improve school safety.

Good examples of projects to prepare children for natural hazards can be found in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Mozambique, Costa Rica, France Madagascar, the Philippines, Iran, Tanzania and Peru, while India, Japan and Nepal's safety initiatives can be replicated globally. "Teaching our children today is empowering the next generation to address disaster risk more effectively tomorrow," Mr. Briceño said.

To introduce children to basic concepts in disaster risk reduction, the French, Spanish, Chinese and Russian language versions of "Stop Disaster," an online game, were launched today. In the game, which was released in English last year, players are presented with disaster scenarios and must reduce its risk with a given budget.

Asia Watch

EC pledges 7.5m euros for South Asia

The European Commission (EC) has allocated 7.5 million euro from the humanitarian aid budget to improve the capacities of communities at risk in South Asia, so that they can better prepare for and protect themselves against natural disasters. A total of 26 new projects are receiving EC funding in India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

They will target the most vulnerable local communities and their institutions, those at greatest risk from natural hazards and with the lowest coping capacities, so that they will be better able to save lives and protect livelihoods if a disaster strikes, according to a press release issued on Friday.

The funds are channelled through the EC's humanitarian aid department (ECHO) under the direct responsibility of Commissioner Louis Michel. With this, the EC is underlining its commitment to the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015.

This funding also aims to improve advocacy for Disaster Risk Reduction measures by means of better exchange of information in the region, documentation of lessons learned and best practices which can be replicated and therefore sustained by the relevant authorities in each country.

Regional cooperation will also be encouraged with ECHO's support to the SAARC commitments to Disaster Risk Reduction by giving concrete examples of life-saving activities within disaster preparedness projects. South Asia is particularly vulnerable to natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, landslides, hurricanes/ cyclones, tropical storms, drought and avalanches and cold waves.

The losses and destruction that result from such disasters are very significant from a social and economic point of view and reduce the development potential of the region.

The region is also frequently hit by small-scale disasters which affect communities already very vulnerable, causing considerable damage to their livelihood. This highlights the ongoing need for disaster preparedness activities and the significance of community-based disaster risk reduction efforts enabling the communities concerned to mitigate hazards and prepare themselves for future natural disasters.

This funding is supported under the fourth Action Plan, following up on similar projects implemented in South Asia since 2002. The strategy has been defined in close cooperation with non- governmental and international organisations, community representatives, local authorities and other stake holders, within the framework of consultative meetings.

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ISDR's efforts to educate children are part of its larger "Disaster Risk Education Begins at School" campaign focusing on improving the safety of school buildings and integrating disaster risk reduction into school curricula.

The campaign kicked off last year with the support of UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the non-governmental organization (NGO) ActionAid International and other partners.

To commemorate the Day, ISDR is convening a roundtable discussion in Geneva to identify how to build on the campaign's results.

(Posted on 10th October)

India wants to build multipurpose dams in Nepal

Chief Minister of Bihar state (India) has pointed out that in order to lessen the effects of flood every year in the state, there is a need for interlinking of rivers "For avoiding the silting of the river-beds, there is a need for cooperation with the Nepal government", he said while meeting with Deputy Chariman of Planning Commission, Montek Singh Ahluwalia yesterday.

He said if multi-purpose dams are constructed in Nepal, flood could be tamed and hydro-electric power could also be co-generated, which could in turn tremendously improve the per capita income of the Nepalese people, The Bihar Times stated in today's edition.

Nitish handed over a copy of 'Special Assistance Plan for Bihar flood' prepared by the state government to Ahluwalia.

(Posted on 7th October)

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