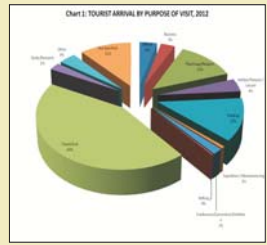




# NEPAL TOURISM NEWS

A Quarterly Publication of Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA), Nepal



## Issue 3/May 2013



### GALA EVENTS TO MARK MT EVEREST DIAMOND JUBILEE

The Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) in coordination with various ministries, diplomatic missions, travel trade entrepreneurs and concerned stakeholders is celebrating the Diamond Jubilee (60th Anniversary) of its first ascent of Mt Everest in May.

On May 29, 1953, New Zealander Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay Sherpa reached atop the world's highest peak. They reached the 8,848 metre summit at 11:30 am over the South Route.

Four-day gala events have been planned from May 26 to mark the special day.

The MoCTCA along with the Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) and the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA) has decided to confer Mt Everest diamond jubilee medals on record-holding summiteers on May 29. These famed mountaineers will be carried in a chariot that will begin from NTB premises to Hanuman Dhoka premises.

Tashi Tenzing, grandson of Tenzing Norgay, and Amelia Rose Hillary and Hillary Carliele, granddaughter and niece of Edmund Hillary, have been invited for the special ceremony. Likewise, other invitees are Kancha Sherpa, surviving member of 1953 Everest Expedition and president of the International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation.

Meanwhile, national and international experts on tourism and mountaineering will be invited to attend a special conference planned on May 29. The conference will discuss promoting mountain tourism in Nepal.

**VIEWPOINTS**  
Sushil Ghimire, Secretary  
Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation

Page 3

**DESTINATIONS**  
Jamunkhadi, Karnali, Sisne Jaljala Dhorpatan

Page 7

**TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE**

Page 9

## SPECIAL REPORT

The MoCTCA in coordination with the NTB has arranged an observation visit for the representatives of various diplomatic missions in Kathmandu to Khumbu and other mountaineering destinations.

The government has also decided to waive peak climbing permit fee of the Mid and Far Western Development Regions next five years.

A postal ticket will be issued to mark the Diamond Jubilee of Mt Everest. A special programme will be held at Khumjung in Solukhumbu District where Hillary has established a school.



A cleaning campaign will be conducted in Everest Base camps. To raise awareness of Climate change, the MoCTCA has planned to hold conference in Khumbu region by bringing concerned stakeholders, representatives of diplomatic mission, experts and media in a single platform.

To mark the day, a logo of Everest Diamond Jubilee will be prepared and the government will request to include the logo in every website run by travel trade entrepreneurs.

An awareness programme on mountain tourism, climate change and importance of mountains in Nepal will be disseminated through media.

A special hording boards, pamphlets and other promotional materials will be prepared and distributed. An art and photo exhibition will be held to raise awareness on mountain tourism.

The Sagarmatha Award and Tenzing Hillary Award will be conferred on the persons who have contributed towards the mountain tourism in Nepal.

Mt Everest is also one of the main sources of foreign exchange earning. The government collects around Rs 270 million as revenue annually by issuing Mt Everest climbing permits. Since the 1950s, tourism has brought major economic changes to the Everest region. Besides, it has stimulated huge numbers of employment and infrastructure in the region.

## THE EVEREST HISTORY

The history of Nepal's tourism development dates back to 1950 when it was first opened to foreigners. Three years latter in 1953, Sherpa and Hillary stepped on top of the world. Since then, Nepal has been recognized as a mountaineering destination. In between 1953-2012, Nepali and foreigners who have succeeded Mt Everest is counted 3,842.

The Lukla Airport—gateway to Mt Everest—was built in 1964. The short-takeoff-and-landing (STOL) airport at 2,800 metre—30-35 minutes from Kathmandu was originally built to ferry goods for Sir Edmund Hillary's school project with The Himalayan Trust.

But now, it is one of the busiest airports in Nepal. During the peak tourist season (March-April-May and September-October-November), Lukla Airport sees more than 50 flights daily.

In 1970, there were around 4,000 tourists recorded in the Khumbu region. Subsequently, in 1972, the government recognized tourism as one of the major economy and formulated first Tourism Master Plan in 1972. In 1973, the government decided to establish Sagarmatha National Park to preserve it from the impact of mountaineering tourism. Today, Sagarmatha National Park receives more than 35,000 tourists annually.

In 1865, Mt Everest, once known as Peak IV was given its official English name by the Royal Geographical Society upon a

recommendation by Andrew Waugh, the British Surveyor General of India. Waugh named the mountain after his predecessor Sir George Everest in 1865, the British surveyor-general of India.

In 1952, the Swiss expedition led by Edouard Wyss-Dunant was granted permission to attempt a climb from Nepal. The expedition established a route through the Khumbu ice fall and ascended to the South Col at an elevation of 7,986 metre.

Raymond Lambert and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay were able to reach a height of about 8,595 metre on the southeast ridge. Tenzing's experience was useful when he was hired to be part of the British expedition in 1953.

In 1953, a ninth British expedition, led by John Hunt, returned to Nepal. Hunt selected two climbing pairs to attempt to reach the summit. The first pair (Tom Bourdillon and Charles Evans) came within 100 metre of the summit on 26 May 1953, but turned back after running into oxygen problems.

Two days later, the expedition made its second and final assault on the summit with its second climbing pair, the New Zealander Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay.

They reached the summit at 11:30 am on 29 May 1953, via the South Col Route. Apa Sherpa has climbed the summit 21 times.

## SOME WORLD RECORDS

- 1922: 7 Sherpa climber died in an avalanche becoming the first reported deaths.
- 1953: Mr. Tenzing Norgay Sherpa and Sir Edmund Percival Hillary succeeded Everest via South-East Ridge Route.
- 1965: First repeat ascent, by Mr. Nawang Gombu.
- 1975: First female ascent, by Ms. Junko Tabei of Japan.
- 1978: First ascent without supplemental oxygen, by Mr. Peter Habeler of Austria and Reinhold Messner of Italy.
- 1980: First solo ascent, by Reinhold Messner
- 1980: First winter ascent, by Mr. Krzysztof Wielicki of Poland.
- 1988: First ascent by woman without oxygen, Ms Lydia Bradey of New Zealand
- 1990: First married couple atop Everest, Mr. Andrej and Mrs. Marija Stremfelj of Slovenia. Marija Stremfelj was also the first Slovenian women to climb Everest
- 1990: First father and son to summit together, by Mr. Jean Noel Roche and his son Roche Bertrand. Roche was 17 years old at the time and became the youngest non-Nepalese person to climb Everest
- 1992: First two brothers to reach summit together, by Mr. Alberto and Mr. Felix Inurategui.
- 1993: The first Nepalese woman, Pasang Lhamu Sherpa, summits Everest but died descending from the summit
- 1998: First handicap (one leg artificial), Mr. Thomas Whittaker of USA
- 1999: Babu Chhiri Sherpa became the first person to sleep on the summit. He spent over 21 hours on summit of Everest without oxygen.
- 2000: Fastest record, by Babu Chhiri Sherpa. He reached Everest 16 hrs 56 min. He has also climbed Everest 10 times.
- 2000: Miss Lhakpa Sherpa became second Nepalese women to summit Everest
- 2000: First descent by ski by Davo Karnicar
- 2001: Mr. Erik Weihenmayer of USA became the first blind person to summit Everest
- 2003: First Nepalese Journalist, by Ang Chhiring Sherpa of Kantipur Daily
- 2003: Mr. Lakpa Gelu Sherpa holds the world record of fastest climbing on the top of the world. He climbed Everest for only 10 hours 56 minutes and 46 seconds.
- 2003: Mr. Lakpa Gelu Sherpa, Mr. Da Nuru Sherpa and Mr. Jangbu Sherpa—three brothers scaled Everest on a same day.
- 2004: Pemba Dorje Sherpa became fastest person to reach the summit from the Base Camp. He completed the distance in 8 hours and 10 minutes.



## "TIME RIFE TO SELL NEPAL'S SAFE DESTINATION IMAGE"

A sustained growth in tourist arrivals has resulted in diversification of tourism products and destinations. The Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) is up to its neck in diversifying and developing various destinations and tourism services over the last couple of years.

By the same token, the ministry has highly prioritized the aviation industry—the lifeline of Nepalese tourism. Another focus is on conservation and development of cultural and natural heritages in the country.

As Nepal is emerging as a prime destination for religious tourism, the MoCTCA has accorded top priority for the development of religious tourism. Overall, the government focus is to make Nepal a prime holidaying destination besides making it travelers' choice for adventure and pilgrim destinations.

The rich natural and cultural diversity has propelled Nepal to international stardom making the country one of the top destinations around the world.

The MoCTCA has focused on developing various trekking trails and hiking routes

in rural areas to promote eco-tourism and create income generating activities in the local level. Plans to set up cable cars in various religious sites are afoot to promote religious tourism and boost local economy.

Over the past couple of years, increasing movement of foreign tourists and Nepali migrant workers has outstripped the seat demand of foreign airlines connecting Nepal. In response, the MoCTCA has moved forward to revise the Air Service Agreement with some countries in desperate need of air passengers.

In a bid to strengthen the national flag carrier Nepal Airlines Corporation (NAC) by expanding its fleet, a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with France-based planemaker Airbus to purchase two narrow body jets. The process to lease two narrow body jets by NAC is also in final stage.

On the infrastructure front, the country's sole international airport with a single runway, Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA), is in the first flush of upgradation. By improving the existing infrastructure of TIA, we believe it will halve the growing traffic pressure.

Likewise, two regional international airports have been planned in Pokhara and Bhairahawa. Works on upgrading



*Sushil Ghimire, Secretary  
Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation*

the Bhairahawa airport to Gautam Buddha Regional International Airport has begun while the development of a new regional international airport in Pokhara will start shortly.

Another milestone for the country's tourism development is the development of second international airport in Bara, Nijgadh. The government has initiated a process for the development of this airport under the Build-Own-Operate-Transfer (BOOT) model.

For the capacity building of the Nepal Tourism Board—the entity responsible for the promotion of Nepal's tourism in the national and international markets, the MoCTCA will review its existing working areas and regulations.

The NTB's working areas will be widened extensively. The MoCTCA has resumed the stalled process of appointing a new NTB Chief Executive Officer. The board will soon get its chief.

However, there are some obstacles to tourism promotion in Nepal. The rowdy activities like bandas and chakkajams have affected tourism and dented Nepal's popularity.

If such activities can be discouraged, Nepal's tourism will move on to higher. The government is well committed to promote Nepal's tourism brand and reposition the image as a safe destination to attract a large number of tourists from different countries.

### *Some worlds.....*

- 2005: Ms Moni Mulepati and Mr Pem Dorjee climbed Everest together and got married at the top
- 2008: Oldest to reach the summit, by Min Bahadur Serchan (76-year-old)
- 2008: On May 22, 2008, there was a record of highest person of 135 to reach Everest on the same day.
- 2010: Mr. Apa Sherpa successfully climbed Everest for 21<sup>st</sup> time.
- 2011: Nine government employees succeed Mt Everest. The civil servant team was led by the incumbent Chief Secretary Mr. Lilamani Paudel.
- 2012: First woman to reach the summit twice in one week, by Chhurim.

## PLAN AND POLICY

### THREE-YEAR PLAN TO STIMULATE TOURISM SECTOR GROWTH

The Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) is mulling over creating 300,000 direct jobs annually in the tourism sector under the three-year interim plan of the government. The plan will be implemented between fiscal year 2013-14 and 2015-16.

Around 120,000 jobs were created in the last fiscal year, and 150,000 more are expected in the current fiscal year.

By attracting private sector investment for infrastructure development under public-private partnership, the ministry aims to double annual tourist arrivals to 1.5 million from 736,215 in 2011.

A work plan will be prepared in coordination with the private sector to carry out special promotional campaigns to attract more visitors from India and China. Likewise, promotional activities will be held in Brazil, Russia, India and China, also known as the BRIC economies.

The average stay length of foreign visitors has been planned to be increased to 14 days from 13.12 days in 2011. The proposed three-year plan and vision will explore new destinations to encourage travellers to prolong their stay.

Similarly, daily expenditure of tourists has been envisaged to increase to US\$ 65 from an average of US\$ 39.90 per day spending in 2011.

The ministry's three-year concept paper aims to raise the tourism sector's GDP contribution to 4 percent from 1.8 percent in 2011.

The ministry plans to increase the number of international airlines serving Nepal to 40. Presently, 29 international airlines are operating 284 scheduled flights weekly between Kathmandu and 22 cities in Asia and Europe.

The plan envisages signing air service agreements (ASA) with three more countries. As of now, Nepal has signed ASAs with 36 countries.

### WORLD TOURISM DAY MARKED AMID FANFARE

The Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) along with the private sector and tourism stakeholders celebrated the 33rd World Tourism Day amid fanfare across the country. The day was marked under the theme 'Tourism and Sustainable Energy: Powering Sustainable Development' set by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

Tourists were welcomed at all tourist entry points and airports by organizing various cultural events and rallies. Overland visitors were received by local stakeholders at the major border points with cultural processions. Bhaktapur, Pokhara and Chitwan, among other tourist hotspots, carried out various programmes to mark the day. The day is celebrated each year on September 27.

### TOURISM MINISTRY TO SUPPORT FOR GUERRILLA TREK DEVELOPMENT



The Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) is supporting the infrastructure development of the much-talked trekking route— 'Guerrilla Trek' —that starts from Myagdi and passes through Rukum and Rolpa.

The trail, divided into three sections and a three-week hike stretching across central and western Nepal, is developed to attract more foreigners providing them a chance to retrace the guerrillas' footsteps.

The idea behind the promotion of the trek is to rebuild the economy by promoting "war tourism" in the areas devastated by the 1996-2006 "People's War". The Maoists were the largest party in the Constituent Assembly until its dissolution in May 2012 over the failure to deliver a post-war constitution.

War tourism has been successful in many countries, including Russia and Vietnam.

The vision of guerilla trek is more or less showing visitors how the people's war began and spread from Rukum.

Yarsagumba Trail and the Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve are also the part of the trek.

Villages like Khara, Khawla, Jhimkhani, Jibang, Khabang, Bafikot, Kunakhet, Pipal, Rukumkot, Maring, Kakri and Tuksara had witnessed the war and still bear the scars of the decade of fighting.

The trail research is promoted by the District Development Committee, Rukum, Nepal Tourism Board and the Trekking Agencies Association of Nepal and explored by Changing Nepal and supported by Sinne Martyr Foundation and Dynamic Youth Society, Rukum.

### REGIONAL TOURISM PROMOTION WORKSHOP

The Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) conducted a day-long workshop in different regional levels to promote tourism. Senior officials from the MoCTCA participated in the workshop held in Dhangadi in the Far Western Development Region, Baglung in Western Development Region, Ilam in the Eastern Development Region and Jumla in the Mid Western Development Region.

Former Joint Secretary of the MoCTCA, Lok Bahadur Khatri, made a presentation in Dhangadi and Baglung. Meanwhile, MoCTCA's Joint Secretary Bal Krishna Ghimire made a presentation in Ilam.



The workshop aims to collect suggestions from the local level and incorporate them in the planning and policy of the country's tourism. Various stakeholders, including private sector, participated in the workshop.

The workshop was facilitated by Janak Raj Bhatta, Under Secretary of the Planning and Evaluation Division of the MoCTCA. The next meeting is scheduled to be held Chitwan of the Central Development Region.

## MOCTCA ACTIVITIES



There were around 160 participants from 17 different Airline companies including Pilots, Engineers, Managers, Ground Crew, etc. The training was supported by many organizations like the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal, International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank group, Yeti Airlines and many other partners.

Mr. Tri Ratna Manandhar, Director General of the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal appreciated private sector efforts in initiating the air safety campaign and ensured every support from the Civil Aviation Authority regarding such interests.

### NEPAL, UAE INK REVISED ASA

The Nepal government and the government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have revised a bilateral Air Services Agreement (ASA).

Sushil Ghimire, Secretary of the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, and Omar Bin Ghaleb, Deputy Director General of the UAE General Civil Aviation Authority, signed the agreement on behalf of their respective countries.

The revised ASA allows operation of 70 flights per week with any type of aircraft on a reciprocal basis.

Earlier, Nepal and the UAE had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on December 27, 2007, permitting to operate 28 weekly flights. The latest revision has permitted third-party code-sharing by carriers of the two countries. The UAE-based carriers have also agreed to sign a separate pact with the Nepal Tourism Board to promote Nepal for mutual benefit.

In addition, the UAE has also pledged to support Nepal in human resource development in the field of aviation. Similarly, the two sides have agreed to hold consultations in 2015 to make air service more liberal.

At present, RAK Airways, Fly Dubai, Air Arabia and Etihad Airways connect Nepal and the UAE. Nepal has bilateral air services agreements with 36 countries. The government officials from the Home and Foreign ministries and senior officials of the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal, Nepal Airlines Corporation and Nepal Tourism Board were present during the signing ceremony.

### AVIATION SAFETY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN HELD

Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) Mr. Ram Kumar Shrestha inaugurated a five day long workshop on Aviation Safety Awareness Campaign organized by the Airline Operators Association of Nepal (AOAN). The campaign started from 6th-10<sup>th</sup> May, 2013.

Inaugurating the programme, Mr. Shrestha said that the Short Take Off and Landing (STOL) operation and the extreme topographical adversities were the major causes of air accidents in Nepal. Mr. Shrestha added that the government was committed to ensure air safety and strengthen the situation of aviation industry in the country.

Captain Samir Sajet, Chief of the Aviation Safety Unit, Mr. Valantino Bagatsing, IFC Resident Representative and Ms. Nicole Menage, Chief of United Nations World Food Programme, Nepal Office shared sights on air safety situation of Nepal and ensured every support from their side to help Nepal come out of this situation in future. Captain Rameshwar Thapa, President of Airlines Operators Association of Nepal concluded the event with commitment from the side of Nepalese Aviation Industry to practice 'Safe Flying' and invited everyone concerned to join hands with the Industry in this mission.

PATA Nepal Chapter is the Industry Partner of this event and helping to integrate Nepalese Tourism Industry including Nepal Tourism Board and the International Partners to join hands in this initiation to make Nepal a "Safe Air Travel" destination.

### SECRETARY GHIMIRE STRESSES NRNS ROLE TO PROMOTE NEPAL IN AUSTRALIA

The Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA), Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) and private sector representatives participated in the Expo Adventure Travel Expo held in Melbourne, Australia from February 23-24, 2013. The delegation was led by MoCTCA Secretary Mr. Sushil Ghimire. During the expo NTB bagged the first prize in the category of 'Best Exhibit' for artistically designing Nepal stand and effectively exhibiting Nepal as a preferred holiday adventure destination. On the occasion, Ghimire met key Non-Resident Nepalese (NRN) representatives in Melbourne and underscored the need of NRNs role in promoting Nepal. Ghimire, who is also the Chairman of NTB, expressed full support and cooperation of Nepal Government to jointly promote Nepalese culture and tourism in Australia. The MoCTCA aimed at exploring the various avenues of Nepalese tourism promotions in Australia.

NTB highlighted the Great Himalayan Trail (GHT) at the expo. Australia holds a great potential as a strong tourism market for Nepal. Nepal is popular as the mountaineering and trekking destination among the majority of the Australian visitors in Nepal. A total of 18,756 Australian tourist arrivals in Nepal were recorded in the year 2012, up 15.1 percent compared to 2011.



## MOCTCA ACTIVITIES

### NAC-AIRBUS MOU TO PURCHASE TWO JETS

The Nepal Airlines Corporation (NAC) has signed a revised Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Airbus to procure two A320-200 aircraft.



NAC Managing Director Mr. Madan Kharel and Airbus Senior Sales Director Mr. Sheel Sukla signed the MoU on behalf of their respective organizations on the NAC premises. The MoCTCA Secretary Mr Sushil Ghimire and joint secretary Mr Ranjan Krishna Aryal were present during the signing ceremony.

As per the MoU, Airbus will deliver one of the two aircraft in February 2015, and the second aircraft will be delivered in March same year. The Cabinet on February 11, 2013, green-signalized to revive the old agreement.

### SITA AIR CRASH PROBE REPORT TO MOCTCA

A commission formed to probe the crash of a Sita Air Dornier aircraft has submitted its report to the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA).

The Dornier aircraft of Sita Air had crashed on the Manohara River bank in Bhaktapur district on September 28, 2012, killing all 19 people onboard. The aircraft was flying from Kathmandu to Lukla, the gateway of the world's highest mountain Mt Everest.

The commission led by former MoCTCA secretary Mr. Nagendra Prasad Ghimire has recommended three interim measures to make aviation service safer. The report was handed over to then MoCTCA Minister Mr. Post Bahadur Bogati.

### MINISTER SHRESTHA LAUDS PVT SECTOR ROLE IN TOURISM

Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation Mr. Ram Kumar Shrestha attended the Nepal China Tourism Exchange Program organized by the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Nepal Chapter.

Speaking at the programme, Minister Shrestha said that Nepal's tourism industry is gradually shifting its dependency from the European market to the Chinese market.

He appreciated the role of Nepali travel trade entrepreneurs for their active participation in various travel fairs in China.

During the programme, Chinese Ambassador to Nepal His Excellency Mr. Wu Chuntai expressed readiness to encourage more Chinese to visit Nepal.

The envoy said Nepal and China share a relationship of brotherhoods—people to people and government to government—for centuries. He said that China would be happy to support tourism infrastructure in Nepal and underscored the need to develop a Chinese Monastery at Lumbini, which could attract a large number of Chinese visitors in the Himalaya nation.

PATA Nepal Chapter Chairman Mr. Suman Pandey during his welcome speech urged all the tourism entrepreneurs to help meet the target of welcoming 215,000 Chinese tourists to Nepal by 2015.

### NATHAM TURNS 41

Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management (NATHM) celebrated its 40th Anniversary amid the presence of various high-ranking government officials.

Addressing a program organized to celebrate the anniversary, Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) Mr. Ram Kumar Shrestha said the government is committed to the development of the tourism sector.

Minister Shrestha said tourism plays an important role in Nepal's economic development and added that the government would accord a high priority to the development of this sector.

MoCTCA's Joint Secretary Mr. Mohan Krishna Sapkota said that students produced by the NATHM have found opportunities across the world. He said that the government would provide necessary support to maintain the quality of the Academy.

Assistant Dean of Tribhuvan University Management Faculty Prof. Dr. Purushottam Sharma, Department Chief of the Academy Ujjwal Satyal, Executive Director Ram Chandra Dhakal and Prof. Dr. Govinda Prasad Acharya were present on the occasion.

Various officials who have served for the NATHM for more than 25 years were honored during the programme. Students who received excellent academic distinctions were also honored at the program.

### TOURISM CAMPAIGN YEARS

- Sisne-Jalajala-Dhorpatan-Karnali Tourism Zone , 2013
- Bideh-Mithila Tourism Zone, 2014
- Birat -Mechi Pahadi Tourism Year, 2015
- Ruru-Resunga-Pokhara-Annapurna-Manaslu Tourism Year, 2016
- Simroun, Kathmandu, Langtang Tourism Year, 2017
- Arun-Sagarmatha Tourism year, 2018
- Chisapani Khaptad, Ramaroshan Tourism Year , 2019 and
- Internal Visit and Civil Aviation Year, 2020

## DESTINATIONS

### JAMUNKHADI, THE EASTERN PARADISE

Jamunkhadi Simsar or Jamunkhadi Wetland is a new tourist destination in the eastern Nepal. It is located at Jamunbari, Surunga VDC-3, in Jhapa district. The wetland is managed and operated by Jamunbari Community Forest (JCF). The Simsar area has been attracting a large number of holiday makers. Besides, people come here for picnic, boating and short vacation. The area has been wooing visitors from different part of eastern region, including from neighboring Indian states like Assam, Darjeeling and Sikkim.



#### Attraction

Jamunkhadi has become a centre of attraction for many visitors. A project, initially launched to conserve forest and protect wildlife, was later converted into a tourist hotspot. The Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation had provided financial support to develop the area in the fiscal year 2009-10. The total land covered by the project is 500 hectares, of which, the wetland covers 10 hectares. The area has a lake in around 4 hectares and boating facilities, which has become visitors' favorite pastime.

Jamunkhadi area, which was abandoned for several decades, was in recent years developed as a tourist destination by the local community. At present, boating and zoological park have been the major attractions of the site. The mini zoo offers visitors a chance to observe a rare sight of three pythons, one of which is claimed to be the biggest ever found in the country. The community plans to develop the area into a full-fledged tourist destination in the long-run. To reach the area, it is roughly 1.5-km north from the East-West national highway. There are a number of tea houses and small hotels in the surrounding areas of Jamunkhadi. However, hotels with standard facilities are available at Surunga Bazaar and Birtamode, 4-km east from Surunga Bazaar.

### SISNE-JALJALA-DHORPATAN

In accordance with the government's Tourism Vision 2020, the year 2013 has been declared Sisne-Jaljala-Dhorpatan Tourism Year. The Sisne-Jaljala-Dhorpatan is a newly opened off the beaten path trekking that offers sweeping views of Mt Sisne, Mt Putha, Mt Dhaulagiri, and Mt Annapurna and among other peaks. Mainly dwelled by the Magar community, one of the indigenous people of Nepal, visitors can observe a trail--Guerilla trek--through the heartland of post-conflict territory dating back to 1996 Peoples' War.

#### Sisne

Sisne is the name of the mountain at Khaula in Rukum district in the mid-Western region. Nobody claims to have conquered this mountain at 5,849 meter (19,195 ft). It is also called 'Virgin Mountain'.

Rukum has many potential tourist attractions that remain unexplored hitherto. It is also called the place of 52 lakes and 53 hills.

Every year hundreds of locals and traders go to Sisne to harvest the famous Yarshagumba- *Cordyceps Sinensis*.

#### Jaljala

Jaljala is located in Thabang VDC of Rolpa district. This place is a pilgrim site in Thabang village of Rolpa in mid-western Nepal situated at an elevation of 3,193 meters.

A temple, known as Jaljala, is in the middle of a meadow where religious festivals are organized in full moon days in the months of March, April and June. Thousands of devotees throng the temple with a belief that their wishes will be fulfilled.

A cave named as "Mama-Phupu, mine of lime stone, diverse seasonal flowers and other flora and fauna, Sun Chhara waterfall, a 50-year-old iron mine in Fagam VDC, among others, are the major attractions of Jaljala.

#### Dhorpatan

Dhorpatan is well-liked for wildlife hunting and also an attractive destination for trekkers. Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve is one of the prime habitats of blue sheep, ghoral, serow, Himalayan thar, black bear, pheasant and partridge and some endangered species of red panda and cheer pheasant.

The Dhorpatan-Jaljala pass trek is also a beautiful destination for hiking. Controlled hunting is allowed with proper licenses and during the certain seasons of the year. Hunting permits and licenses are issued by the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation in Kathmandu.

### DESTINATION KARNALI

The Karnali River, according to international rafting standards, is one of the top three rivers in the world for kayaking and rafting.

Karnali Zone includes two National Parks--Shey Phoksundo with Phoksundo Lake and Rara National Park boasting Rara Lake. Shey Phoksundo is famous for snow leopards and is also Nepal's largest wildlife park. Rara National Park is considered a pearl of Nepal.

#### Rara Lake

Rara Lake can be conquered by a flight within 35-40 minutes from Nepalgunj and Surkhet to Talcha Airport. Trekking and road transportation are other options. From Talcha Airport, Rara Lake is reachable by an half an hour jeep drive or around 2-hour walk or a one-and-a-half hour horse ride. There is one hotel in the Rara area.





Visitors can enjoy boating in the lake as the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) has provided 7 boats that are operated by Nepal Army personnel. The MoCTCA is also constructing a side-track around the Rara Lake periphery.

Humla, Jumla, Dolpa, Kalikot and Mugu are remote Himalayan districts of Karnali zone in mid-western Nepal.

### Jumla Tatopani

Jumla is famous for organic apple farming. It also boasts a natural hot water spring (called 'Tatopani' in local language) that has a healing effect. There are five traditional water taps managed by the local community. The MoCTCA has been supporting infrastructure development in the area. Jumli beans as lentils are popular local products in the region.



There are various religious sites in this region and is connected with the socio-political history of the country having the root of Nepali language, originally called Khas language. The Khas civilization was originated here.





# TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE

## SOUTH ASIA TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT(SATIDP)

South Asia Tourism Infrastructure Development Project, a part of regional project, is designed to develop and improve tourism-related infrastructure in Nepal, India and Bangladesh. In the Nepal portion of the Project, it aims to develop the “Footsteps of the Lord Buddha Circuit” by focusing interventions on the Lumbini Master Plan Development complex, which is the birth place of Lord Buddha and a World Heritage Site. Interventions are directed at,

a. Connectivity Enhancement:

Upgrading of existing Gautam Buddha Airport to the standard of Regional International Airport.

b. Destination Improvements in Lumbini Master Plan Area

- Review the genesis/relevance of the existing master plan of Prof. Kenzo Tange and introduction of additional comprehensive eco-friendly transportation plan within the Lumbini site
- Visitor information centre and associated to it features such as landscaping, pedestrian walkways, toilet facilities, solid waste management and parking arrangements for cars and buses
- Tourist infrastructure facilities such as potable water supply system, sanitation, solid waste management and appropriate signage

c. Fostering Community Participation, Capacity Building and Project Management

- Fostering Community Participation
  - (i) Implementing programs to promote awareness of, and develop skills of communities around the Lumbini world heritage site to participate in livelihood opportunities arising from heritage management and tourism;
- Capacity Building - improving institutional capacity and developing human resources to enhance:

At Lumbini Development Trust (LDT)

- (i) strategic planning
- (ii) visitor management
- (iii) environmental management
- (iv) maintenance of site infrastructure
- (v) revenue generation and financial management
- (vi) support for community participation in heritage tourism and
- (vii) support for preparation of master and management plans for the Lumbini World Heritage Site

at CAAN

- (i) preparing a business plan for Gautam Buddha Airport and improve the operation and management of Gautam Buddha Airport and

at MoCTCA

- (i) improving through NTB the marketing and promotion of Lumbini and other Buddhist heritage sites;
  - Project Management— provision of equipment, logistical support and Consulting Services to MoCTCA, CAAN and LDT for assistance with Project implementation, including incremental administration and funding costs of the PCU and PMIUs.

### EXECUTING AND IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES

Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) is the project executing agency. It has formed project coordination unit (pcu) for effective execution of the project. Caan is the implementing agency of connectivity enhancement part (Gautam Buddha airport upgrading component) and LDT is for destination improvement part (work on Lumbini master plan area).

### FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT

By Financier

		Mill. US\$	In %
-Asian Development Bank	Grant	12.75	27.4
-Asian Development Bank	Loan	12.75	27.4
-OPEC Fund for Int. Dev.	Loan	15.00	32.3
-Government of Nepal		<u>6.00</u>	<u>12.9</u>
		46.50	100

By Component (with contingencies)

	Mill. US\$	In %
-Gautam Buddha Airport Upgrading	38.15	81.95
-Heritage Site Improvement (LDT)	2.62	5.75
-Community Participation, capacity Building and Project Management	5.01	10.80
-Interest during Implementation	<u>0.72</u>	<u>1.50</u>
	46.50	100

Revised cost estimate for Gautama Buddha Airport Upgrading Component has reached to 90.6 million US \$, for which the process of additional fund management is actively ongoing with ADB and GoN.



Proposed new Gautam Buddha International Airport.

## IMPACT AND OUTCOME

The expected impact of the Project is inclusive and sustainable development through enhanced protection, management and presentation of cultural heritage sites which are the primary attractions on which tourism depends. The overall impact of the project has intended to reflect an increase in the contribution of tourism to the subregion's economy and employment opportunities, including local livelihoods. The expected outcomes of the Project will be nature and culture based tourism destinations of subregional importance with

- (i) improved connectivity
- (ii) better quality environment and visitor services
- (iii) enhanced natural and cultural heritage; and
- (iv) stronger linkages with communities.

## CONNECTIVITY ENHANCEMENT.

This component aims to enhance air access to Lumbini by upgrading the Gautam Buddha airport to international standards. This involves

- (i) construction of a new runway 2600(now proposed 3000.00)m, exit taxiway, and apron pavement;
- (ii) rehabilitation of the existing runway for conversion to parallel taxiway;
- (iii) refurbishment and expansion of existing terminal building as a domestic terminal building;
- (iv) construction of a new international terminal building;
- (v) new control tower, customs and cargo building, and crash fire rescue building;
- (vi) water supply, sewerage, and drainage improvements and other civil works such as Ghaghara Khola irrigation canal diversion, roads, and security fence;
- (vii) expansion of fuel farm; and
- (viii) and installation of communication and navigational equipment suitable for international airports. The airport will be constructed as category 4E in accordance with the guidelines of the International Civil Aviation Organization.

## DESTINATION IMPROVEMENTS.

This component focuses on the Lumbini master plan area. It aims to enhance the protection and management of Lumbini and experience of visitors by improving the environmental quality, the outstanding universal value of the site, and visitor facilities. Improvements include

- (i) development of car parking and bus stop;
- (ii) completion of the unfinished portion of the perimeter road;
- (iii) provision of localized source-based drinking water supply;
- (iv) provision of toilets in key locations;
- (v) solid waste management improvements;
- (vi) enhancement of on-site interpretation displays and signage telling the Buddhist history of Lumbini; and
- (vii) construction of a visitor center, and landscaping and pedestrian walkways around the visitor center to enhance initial reception of visitors and provide visitors with required information and orientation about Lumbini.

## FOSTERING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION, CAPACITY BUILDING, AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT.

This component aims to foster community engagement in heritage management and tourism, build the capacity of agencies involved in managing heritage and tourism infrastructure, and support effective and timely implementation of the Project.

**Community Participation.** The subcomponent includes community awareness-raising programs on the importance of Lumbini as a world heritage site and potential benefits from tourism to the local economy, particularly new markets and livelihood opportunities that the local people can access. The subcomponent also supports a demonstration scheme for heritage tourism livelihood generation including

- (i) social mobilization,
- (ii) skills development in heritage site management and tourism-related activities based on a value chain analysis, and
- (iii) linking communities to available microfinance services. Local and nongovernment organizations (NGOs) and microfinance service providers experienced in similar schemes are expected to be involved as needed. The scheme builds on Nepal's good practice "Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation project" and emphasizes market linkages.

**Capacity Building.** This subcomponent primarily supports capacity building and human resource development of

- (i) LDT which is responsible for planning and management of the Lumbini area; and
- (ii) the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN), which is in charge of air transport infrastructure and services.

**Assistance to LDT.** Includes developing and implementing measures to strengthen LDT in

- (i) strategic planning,
- (ii) heritage protection,
- (iii) visitor management,
- (iv) environmental management,
- (v) maintenance of site infrastructure,
- (vi) financial management and revenue generation,
- (vii) coordination of multi-stakeholders, and
- (viii) engagement of communities in heritage tourism. As part of the efforts to promote Lumbini, the Project also provides assistance to the Nepal Tourism Board to design and implement a marketing program for Lumbini and other Buddhist sites in its vicinity.

**Assistance to CAAN.** The assistance focuses on enhancing the capacity for management of Gautam Buddha airport. This involves preparation and implementation of a business plan for the airport, including support for setting and restructuring aeronautical and non-aeronautical rates, possible outsourcing of various functions and other cost management measures, as well as staff training programs in airport management and financing.

**Project Management.** This subcomponent supports funding the costs of the project coordination unit (PCU) in the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation (MOTCA) and project management and implementation units (PMIUs) in LDT and CAAN, including incremental administration and operations related to implementation, provision of equipment, logistics, and consulting services.



# TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE

## Airport infrastructure development starts



The Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN) has started upgrading various airport infrastructures, including installation of modern equipment in domestic airports.

The CAAN has started blacktopping runways in Dolpa, Bajura, Khani Danda, Chaurjhari and Salle of Rukum, Faplu, Dang, Talcha at Mugu and Rumjatar. Likewise, black-topping in Ramechhap, Bhojpur and Taplejung airports is scheduled to begin soon.

The aviation authority has started upgrading the Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA). The country's sole international airport is being upgraded under the Asian Development Bank's assistance of US\$ 80million—US\$70 million in loans and US\$10 million in grant.

Likewise, works of the proposed two regional international airports—Gautam Buddha Regional International Airport in Bhairahawa and Pokhara Regional International Airport—are likely to begin soon.

## New domestic terminal at TIA

The Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA) is getting a new domestic terminal with improved and advanced facilities next year. The then Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) Mr. Post Bahadur Bogati laid the foundation stone for the domestic terminal.

The proposed disabled-friendly building will be stretched 30-meter to the west of the existing terminal. Construction is expected to be completed within a year.



MoCTCA Secretary Mr. Sushil Ghimire lauded CAAN's initiative to make the new building disabled friendly. The space to be occupied by the terminal building, a road and parking will total 4,959 square meters. A 571 sq m area will be set aside for airline offices, restaurants and restrooms. There will be a separate space for domestic cargo. The existing terminal, designed to handle 384 passengers per hour, was expanded and renovated in 1995.

Similarly, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has signed a grant agreement with the Nepal government to provide Rs 906 million to install two new radars at the Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA) and Bhatte Danda in Lalitpur.

The second generation Monopulse Secondary Surveillance Radar (MSSR) systems will be installed at the TIA and Bhatte Danda under JICA's TIA modernization project. The MSSR ensures high performance to improve reliability and safety of air transport. Installation of MSSR systems at the TIA and Bhatte Danda will extend en-route surveillance up to 200 nautical miles.

The coverage of the new MSSR would extend up to Dang in the west and the entire country in the east, north and south. Once the new systems are installed, radars will monitor small aircraft flying on domestic air routes as well as international aircraft flying in high altitude. The project is expected to be completed by 2015.

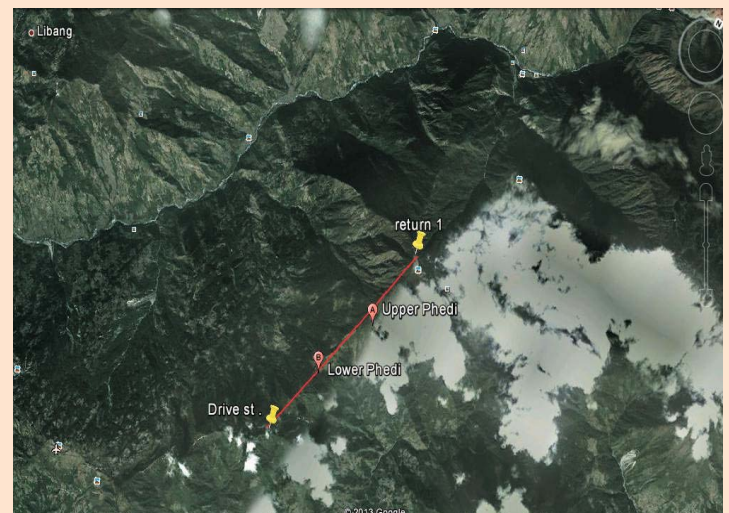
## Cable car in Pathibhara, Swargadwari

The Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) has planned cable car projects at two religious locations—Pathibhara in Taplegunj and Swargadwari in Pyuthan.

Under the MoCTCA's Tourism Infrastructure Development Project, these two projects have been planned to develop under the Public Private Partnership (PPP) model.

Pathibhara in the Eastern Region is home to the popular Pathibhara Devi temple. Located 3,800 meters above the sea level, it offers a magnificent view of Kanchenjunga Range.

The planned cable car from Mathilo Phedi to Pathibhara stretches 3 kilometers. Swargadwari in the Western Region is famous for a hilltop temple, which is named among Nepal's top pilgrimage sites and is listed on the national inventory of cultural and historic heritage site. It is located 2,100 meters above the sea level. The 2.5-km cable car will connect Mathilo Bhingi with Swargadwari.



# TOURISM STATISTICS

Table 1: Tourist Arrival by Month, 2011-12.

Month	2011	2,012	% Change
January	42,622	52,501	23.2
February	56,339	66,459	18.0
March	67,565	89,151	31.9
April	59,751	69,796	16.8
May	46,202	50,317	8.9
June	46,115	53,630	16.3
July	42,661	49,995	17.2
August	71,398	71,964	0.8
September	63,033	66,383	5.3
October	96,996	86,379	-10.9
November	83,460	83,173	-0.3
December	60,073	63,344	5.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>736,215</b>	<b>803,092</b>	<b>9.1</b>

NUMBER OF TOURIST ARRIVAL BY PURPOSE AND SEX, 2012

Purpose of Visit	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
Official	24,507	6,418	30,925
Business	21,110	3,945	25,055
Pilgrimage/Religion	42,763	59,720	102,483
Holiday Pleasure / Leisure	18,825	14,049	32,874
Trekking	58,880	45,321	104,201
Expedition / Mountaineering	3,507	1,489	4,996
Conference/Convention/Exhibition	10,168	3,577	13,745
Rafting	1,075	675	1,750
Travel/Visit	175,304	172,417	347,721
Study/Research	10,934	8,041	18,975
Other	16,854	12,827	29,681
Not Specified	55,343	35,343	90,686
<b>Total</b>	<b>439,270</b>	<b>363,822</b>	<b>803,092</b>

Table 2: NUMBER OF TOURIST ARRIVAL BY MONTH AND ENTRY POINT, 2012

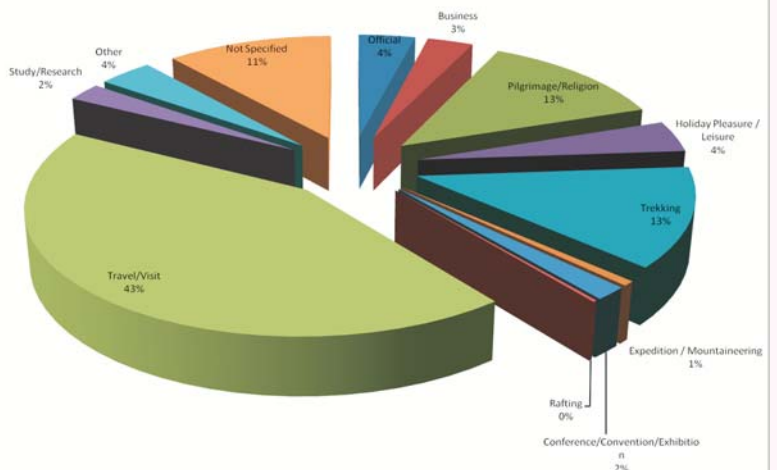
Month	Bhairahawa	Birjung	Dhangadi	Kakarvitta	Kanchanpur	Kodari	Nepalgunj	Bhairahawa (Same day)	Total
January	4,413	236	2	504	112	1,623	13	3,563	10,466
February	12,291	99	4	380	124	838	24	9,974	23,734
March	12,848	97	5	609	177	1,125	24	10,453	25,338
April	3,919	67	6	559	235	2,352	34	3,216	10,388
May	880	54	3	369	102	5,285	24	776	7,493
June	794	45	6	305	71	8,482	6	681	10,390
July	1,534	49	-	204	82	8,479	14	1,176	11,538
August	9,888	52	4	281	80	8,894	6	8,201	7,406
September	5,018	39	10	261	155	7,851	14	3,950	7,298
October	7,335	86	1	360	193	4,424	29	6,047	8,475
November	11,494	73	2	535	145	1,891	30	9,584	3,754
December	9,014	111	1	376	126	1,432	57	7,437	8,554
<b>Total</b>	<b>79,428</b>	<b>1,008</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>4,743</b>	<b>1,602</b>	<b>52,676</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>65,058</b>	<b>204,834</b>

Table : Passenger Movement of Ultra-Light, Pokhara, 2012

Month	Year	
	2011	2012
January	216	582
February	397	424
March	287	401
April	401	489
May	367	453
June	402	93
July	-	-
August	-	29
September	255	232
October	452	699
November	319	440
December	430	469
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,526</b>	<b>4,311</b>

Source : Civil Aviation Office, Pokhara

Chart 1: TOURIST ARRIVAL BY PURPOSE OF VISIT, 2012



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