PM Nepal Participates in EU Development Days
'Nepal-EU cooperation must be fortified to meet emerging needs'

Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal participated in the European Development Days (EDD) in Brussels on 6 and 7 December. The EDD was organised by the European Commission in cooperation with the Belgian Presidency of the European Union. The EDD forum, a yearly event launched in 2006 is a vehicle for aid effectiveness and an opportunity for decision makers from around the world to meet and to strengthen the European Consensus on development cooperation.

It is a flagship event which showcases the EU’s continuing and enduring commitment to development. It brings together current and former Heads of State and Government from Europe, Africa and rest of the world, high-level representatives of governments, international organisations as well as development practitioners, NGOs, media and civil society.

The four previous editions have featured 31 Heads of State, 44 Heads of Government or ministers and 6 Nobel Prize winners. The last edition in 2009 in Stockholm attracted a total of 6000 participants.

Addressing the meeting of the EDD, PM Nepal said that climate change, desertification and extreme weather patterns are undermining the development gains of Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

Nepal, who is also the chair of the 49-nation LDC group said the LDC are least responsible for and have the least capacity to cope with climate change. LDCs face the challenges of being landlocked, of conflict, of natural disasters and devastations compounded by the impacts of climate change, he told the EDD meeting.

During the EDD, Prime Minister Nepal held a meeting with Mr. Jose Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission in Brussels and touched upon various issues of bilateral interests. The Prime Minister apprised Mr. Barroso of the development in the ongoing peace process and the drafting of a new constitution for the post-conflict nation. He said that Nepal attached high importance to a constructive relationship with the European Union and emphasized that the cooperation between Nepal and EU should be further strengthened and expanded to meet the changing needs of time.

The Prime Minister pointed to the 4th Global LDC Conference to be held in Istanbul in May 2011 and solicited an active and lead support of the EU to ameliorate the overall condition of the LDC countries.

President Barroso, while emphasizing the paramount importance of peace and stability to Nepal, assured that EU could scale up its development cooperation for Nepal based on its genuine needs. He said that EU would like to see better engagement with Nepal and the LDCs group to bring more visible impacts of its development aid and the preferential market access provided to them. He said that around 80 percent of the development and humanitarian aid to the LDCs was coming from the EU and its member countries, and despite the financial and economic crisis, EU would try to maintain its leading share.

Mr. Barroso agreed in principle the invitation to visit Nepal at a convenient time. Dates for the visit will be worked out through diplomatic channel, according to diplomatic sources.

Similarly, the Prime Minister met Mrs. Kristalina Georgieva, Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Action and Crisis Response on the sideline of the EDD 2010 on 7 December and discussed how the EC’s humanitarian action could be channelled to the most needy areas of reconstruction, rehabilitation and disaster response.

PM Nepal also held a meeting with Mr. Andris Piebalgs, EC Development Commissioner, and talked on the broader issues of EU development cooperation strategy with Nepal and the LDCs and how to strengthen and expand them.
About 7,000 people attended the European Development Days. They discussed how to more efficiently and effectively deliver aid, address issues such as food security, water, health, education, human rights, gender equality, democracy, good governance, and economic and social growth.

The EU, along with its member countries, is the world’s biggest aid donor, contributing over half of the money used to help developing countries. It also drives development by opening its markets to exports and encouraging regional economic integration.

Even during the economic downturn, as much as 89% of Europeans believe development aid remains very or fairly important, according to a 2010 survey. About 50% say the EU should honour its commitment to increase aid to 0.7% of gross national income by 2015 and 14% want the bloc to give even more.

This year’s forum also focused on the special needs of the world’s least developed countries, gender equality and the problem of fake medicines.

One EDD panel examined the advantage of considering children’s rights in development policy. A related seminar on the exchange of best practice examined the plight of children working in the cacao industry.

Another panel outlined the evolution of the EU’s development policy and its role in supporting democracy in developing countries. Discussions on how to combat poverty through promoting gender equality were held, along with a debate on the role of local authorities, according to information posted in the European External Action Service (EEAS) website.

The EEAS started functioning as a separate unit of the European Union overseeing matters related to foreign policy starting 1 Jan 2011 and was formed as per the provision in the Lisbon Treaty ratified by all the 27 EU Member States.

Most importantly, the EU executive discussed a forthcoming EU initiative to improve access to energy in developing countries and the bloc’s efforts at achieving the UN’s Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which have set global targets for reducing poverty by 2015.

Substantial and important reports and studies, including the European Report on Development 2010 were released during the forum.

EU-Nepal Joint Commission
EU reaffirms continued support to Nepal’s Peace Process

A seven-member European Union Delegation led by Mr. James Moran, Director for Asia in the External Action Service visited Nepal from 13 to 17 December. The Delegation participated in the seventh EU-Nepal Joint Commission meeting. The meeting takes place once every two years and aims to assess the overall impact of the European Union development cooperation in the areas prioritized by the Country Strategy Paper. The delegates took stock of the development needs and priorities of the Nepal Government through interactions with policy makers and political leaders.

Mr. Moran reaffirmed EU’s commitment to Nepal’s peace process and called for an early adoption of the constitution. He expressed worries over the lingering political deadlock and called on the parties to reach an early consensus to elect a prime minister approved by parliament.

The EU delegation reiterated the importance of the rapid integration and rehabilitation of Maoist ex-combatants in light of UNMIN’s scheduled departure on 15 January, 2011. The parties have been asked to come up with a comprehensive action plan to ensure that the works carried out by UNMIN so far are consolidated and carried forward.

The EU delegates met the President, Prime Minister, the Speaker, Foreign Secretary, the Chief of the Army Staff and the Acting Election Commissioner during the course of their visit.

The delegates also participated in a media interaction bringing with them the explicit message that the EU’s desire and sole priority in the country is to see a prosperous and democratic Nepal.

In this way, Mr. Moran underscored the urgency to end the existing climate of impunity and move forward with the setting up of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the Commission on the Inquiry on Disappearances.

Addressing the assembled journalists, Mr Moran also drew attention to Nepal’s lack of a secure and friendly investment climate as a clear hindrance to economic prosperity in the country. Unless the political parties address the existing stalemate and a friendly investment climate is put into place, Nepal’s economic development, and thus the qualitative improvements in the living standards of the Nepalese people, will see further setbacks, he added.
European parliamentarians hold extensive discussions on Nepal’s development needs in November 2010

Nepal has continued to receive a high degree of attention from the European Union. The visit of the parliamentarians representing the Committee on Development of the European Parliament from 1 Nov to 5 Nov was certainly a moment for both the sides to assess the impact of the Euro 120 million worth development assistance provided for seven years starting 2007.

The parliamentary delegation was led by Enrique Guerrero Salom (EGS) and had Niçcolo Rinaldi (ALDE), Nirj Deva (ECR) and Jean Lambert (Green/EFA) as members.

The Committee is responsible for the promotion, implementation and monitoring of the development cooperation policy of the European Union. It holds political dialogue with developing countries, bilaterally and in the relevant international organizations and interparliamentary to enhance cooperation.

Mr. Guerrero Salom clarified at the outset of the visit that the EU is committed to help Nepal achieve peace and stability through well-planned efforts geared towards ensuring good governance.

The parliamentary delegation learnt about the overall situation of Nepal in relation to efforts to empower women, children and the marginalized communities, bridge the gender gap, protect and promote human rights and at the same time take timely steps to have an inclusive and widely representative constitution.

The delegation met Ministers, women leaders, and rights activists apart from paying a field visit to a school in Bhaktapur to see the impact of the assistance given to the Nepal Government under the School Sector Reform Programme.

They had an elaborate discussion with journalists on the existing state of EU-Nepal cooperation and the improvement needed to get the desired results.

Journalists voiced the need to step up monitoring efforts and ensure that the EU assistance is being utilized for the desired outcome.

The delegation also held discussions with the Election Commission officials on the ongoing preparations for elections given the fact that the EU has been advocating for a free and fair election for the consolidation of democracy in Nepal.

The EP delegation expressed the intention to continue actively supporting Nepal in its development efforts and called for the logical conclusion of the peace process.
European Union Food Facility (EUUFF) funding paves the way for food Security and market opportunities

In Baitadi, one of the poorest and most isolated districts in Nepal, a 32-Km long road is being built as part of the Dehimandu-Giregada Rural Road Construction Project over the next three years to provide improved access to markets and livelihood opportunities for over 8,000 local households.

During agricultural lean months, local villagers get the opportunity to work on the road building project in exchange for food and money as part of WFP’s Food/Cash for Assets (F/CFA) programme, funded by the European Union Food Facility (EUUFF).

“Usually at this time of the year (March to May), my family struggles to put proper meals on the table,” says 52-year-old Raj Bahadur Malla. “But with this project, I am able to work and get additional food and money for my family and good nutrition for my children,” he says.

In exchange for his labour on the road, Raj gets 2 Kg of rice, 250 gm of lentil and NPR 60 for a day’s work, plus a sachet of Vitamix, a nutritional supplement for children under five years of age.

Keshab Bahadur Bohara, a local farmer, is very excited about the road and believes it will create many opportunities for the villagers once they are connected to the nearest town, Dehimandu. “I have seen how people’s lives have changed after roads came to their areas, and I am looking forward to seeing what it will bring to my village.”

Once the road is completed, Keshab will be able to sell milk and citrus fruit in the market, and he says the income will improve his family’s livelihood. Both Raj and Keshab complain that currently their surplus agricultural products rot because of poor market access. They both expect this road to change that. “I am getting old, so I will not be able to enjoy what the road will bring to our village for long, but for my children and grandchildren it will be a different story,” Raj said before going to work on the stretch of road that winds its way into his village.

In 2009, WFP received US $12 million in funding from the EU Food Facility to undertake livelihood and agricultural improvement projects through food/cash for work activities.

WFP’s Food/Cash For Assets (F/CFCA) programme

WFP’s Food/Cash For Assets (F/CFCA) programme targets the most food insecure and vulnerable communities with projects that improve production and livelihoods while providing assistance to meet immediate food and nutrition needs. In 2010, the programme targeted 1.6 million Nepalese. The work activities included: road and bridge development and repair, irrigation systems, fishery ponds and cash crop cultivation. Project activities are designed to be undertaken between planting and harvest periods when household food stocks are leanest.
Nepal Judiciary is all smiles now with quicker computer assisted case management under EU assistance

Ram Krishna Timilsena, Registrar of the Supreme Court and his team of experts have something to boast about. Their pride, which is a genuine one, relates to no other than the long and gruelling efforts they have made over the past few years to computerize the entire working environment of the Supreme Court.

The European Union Delegation to Nepal is more than just happy to have been able to support Timilsena’s ‘dream project’. The Conflict Mitigation Package II programme with a package of euro 7 million (700 million rupees) launched in May 2007 has become instrumental to contribute in a meaningful way to Timilsena’s desire to see the Supreme Court managing cases and its day to day activities with the help of computers.

The CMP II project wound up in November after completing all works related to installation at the Supreme Court, National Human Rights Commission, National Judicial Academy and Nepal Bar Association.

The representatives of the respective institutions receiving EU support to digitalize their office systems expressed their gratitude to the donor for its valuable support during a final presentation held on 30 November, 2010 in Kathmandu.

“I had a dream of revamping the working atmosphere and installing computers at the Supreme Court when I was first appointed as the registrar,” Timilsena told the final sharing programme.

He said that most of the employees at the Supreme Court seemed to do their work on paper and computer seemed to be something unheard of. “I began to work in that direction gradually and with the support of institutions like the EU a lot has changed over the past few years,” Timilsena said.

Prior to the launching of the project, the Supreme Court did have some infrastructure and use of computers but it was quite limited. There was only partial implementation of the case management systems in local networking environment. But things have undergone visible progress.

The Judges and justices have easier computer and internet access. The subsidiary courts under have been strengthened in the information technology sector and training has been imparted to over 170 individuals in different aspects of IT. Now the Supreme Court has an integrated, centralized web based system.

Cases can now be managed thoroughly on the computers and attorneys can also track the cases that they are dealing with, Deepak Timilsena, IT Director of the Supreme Court told the final sharing programme.

He informed that there were three major components of the project i) Case Management System ii) Office automation system iii) Public domain automation system. The last one will enable the Supreme Court to disseminate information to project partners and the public.

The Information Communication Technology for Nepal Judiciary component has included the procurement of IT equipment for the courts, Nepal Judicial Council, Nepal Bar Association and the Nepal Human Rights Commission as well as 22 District Legal Aid Committees that help to deliver access to justice throughout Nepal.

This included 140 computers, 80 printers, two standby generators, network components and cabling at 44 locations and many items of ancillary equipment. The other main elements have been development of the computer programmes for the specialized judicial information system and extensive training for all the stakeholders.
Photos from the life of the EU Delegation

Mr. James Moran, European Union Director for Asia responding to the queries of Nepal Television right before the interaction with journalists at the Garden of Dreams.

Dr. Alexander Spachis sheds light on the role of the European Union in Nepal’s development while interacting with Rotaract members at the delegation on 25 Nov. 2016. The delegation organized a “EU Open House” for 32 young Rotaract on 25 November.

A glimpse from the function “Celebrating Womanhood Navadivi Awards” co-funded by the European Union. The Delegation of the European Union to Nepal supported Creative Statements to felicitation outstanding women making significant contributions to different social sectors in the year 2016.

Journalists from mid and far-west Nepal participating in a training to promote cultural harmony and development in Nepal. The training was organized by Worldview Nepal in partnership with CEC in the project “Sahajamitha: Strengthening Local Cultures to Build Harmony in Nepal” being run with the support of the European Union.

Minister for Local Development Purna Kumar Sharma (Third from left) taking part at a seminar on “Policy Dialogue on constitutional Protection of cultural rights” organized by Institute of Governance and Development (IGD) in Kathmandu. IGD has been running the project “Enhancing cultural Diversity for Dignity and Development of Indigenous Communities” with the support of the European Union.

A glimpse from the “EU Open House” organized by the European Union Delegation to Nepal.

Visiting European Parliamentarians representing the “Committee on Development” interacting with members of Women Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC) at the Delegation.
What funding for EU external action after 2013?

The European Commission has begun a public consultation to gather ideas and opinions on the future of the financial instruments that the European Union has at its disposal to fulfil its worldwide responsibilities.

The Commission welcomes contributions from all citizens, organizations and public authorities in Europe and third countries; Member States, EU institutions, national, regional and local authorities, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, international financial institutions, academia, social partners and civil society organizations.

The period of consultation started on 29 November, 2010 and will end on the 31st of January 2011.

Responses are requested on a range of issues. These include the added value of EU financial intervention in several areas, the options for new forms of cooperation and delivery mechanisms with partner countries, as well as the efficiency, impact and visibility of EU external cooperation.

The online consultation, which is open to all stakeholders, is preparing the ground for the Commission legislative proposals to be presented in 2011 on the financial perspectives after 2013.

The European Union shows solidarity on the global stage by providing more than half of all international development aid, whilst it is also the world’s biggest donor of humanitarian assistance.

It is actively involved in protecting human rights, promoting decent work agenda, other universal values and international environmental and social conventions. The EU is increasingly active in conflict prevention, crisis management and peace building, through EU-led crisis management missions as well as through EU crisis response and stabilisation instruments. Moreover, the EU is committed to supporting the multilateral system and its reform.

External policies are therefore a major field of action for the EU, which has been reinforced within the new institutional framework of the Lisbon Treaty.

The EU uses the financial instruments for external relations to support the implementation of its external policies. They are set out in legislative instruments (Regulations) which expire at the end of 2013, coinciding with the end of the current 2007-2013 Multi-annual Financial Frameworks. In the course of 2011, the European Commission will present its proposals for the post-2013 Multiannual Financial Framework (on which annual EU budgets will then be based), including the legislative proposals for the financial instruments for external relations.

In preparing these major legislative proposals, the Commission would like to receive opinions and ideas. The purpose of this public consultation is to gather contributions from interested citizens and stakeholders on specific aspects and options for future EU external spending. These contributions will assist the Commission in developing its proposals for the post-2013 legislative financial instruments for external action.

For the EU partners in Nepal who want to submit their suggestions, the other option of putting forward your suggestions is to log on to the Delegation’s website: www.delnp.lco.europa.eu where you will find the button entitled ‘What Funding for EU External Action After 2013’. After logging on to the website click on the said button which will then take you to the desired page where it is advised that you read the concept document which clearly explains the objective of the consultations before you actually set out to answer the 16 questions.

Estonia, 17th EU Member State to adopt the euro

The Council of the European Union on 13 July decided to allow Estonia to adopt the euro as its currency with effect from 1 January 2011. This decision has extended the euro area to a 17th Member State.

The Council also adopted Regulations setting a permanent conversion rate for the Estonian kroon against the euro, and adapting certain technical provisions on the euro.

Euro notes and coins will be issued in Estonia at the same time as adoption of the euro.

This conversion rate is set at 15.6466 Estonian krooni to one euro, which corresponds to the current central rate of the kroon in the EU’s exchange rate mechanism (ERM II).

Euro banknotes and coins were introduced:
– on 1 January 2002 in Belgium, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy,

Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Austria and Finland; 
– on 1 January 2007 in Slovenia;
– on 1 January 2008 in Cyprus and Malta; and
– on 1 January 2009 in Slovakia
ERASMUS MUNDUS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

This Call for Proposals aims to support projects under all three Actions of the programme.

**Action 1: Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes**
- Action 1A: Erasmus Mundus Master Courses (EMMC)
- Action 1B: Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorates (EMJD)

**Action 2: Erasmus Mundus Partnerships**
- Action 2 – STRAND 1: Partnerships with countries covered by the ENPI, DCI, EDF and IPA instruments (former External Cooperation Window)
- Action 2 – STRAND 2: Partnerships with countries and territories covered by the Industrialised Countries Instrument (ICI)

**Action 3: Promotion of European higher education**
- Projects to enhance the Attractiveness of European higher education

The deadline for submission of applications under all three Actions is 29 April 2011.


**ERASMUS MUNDUS INFO DAY**

The Erasmus Mundus Info Day on 7 February 2011 provides more information on the Call. It will explain the application process and documents, and give tips and advice on how to prepare a strong proposal under all three of the Actions. The Info Day will take place in Brussels, and be broadcast live via webstreaming.

Participants at the event, and people following the sessions on line will be able to post questions. A partner search mechanism will also be available. Registration will open in early January.


**Erasmus Mundus Scholarships**

Opportunities for higher education in Europe for Nepalese students

**Funding Opportunities**

Two calls for proposals related to Food Security Thematic Programme, were launched on 18 November 2010. About €22 million have been separated for the two calls. The first call is for ‘Agricultural Productivity’ while the second call is for ‘South-South dialogue and intra-regional learning’. For further details of the call and application procedure please log on to the site: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/asia/regionalcooperation/food_security/index_en.htm

A new call under ‘SWITCH-Asia’ was launched on the 22nd of December, 2010 for promoting Sustainable Consumption and Production. For details of the call and application procedure please log on to the site: europeaid/onlineservices/index.cfm?ADSSChck=1293010387282&do=publ&detPUB&searchtype=QS&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&nbPubList=15&page=1&aoRef=130830

Both the calls can also be accessed at the website of the Delegation of the European Union to Nepal: www.delnpl.ec.europa.eu

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With the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty on 1 December, 2009, we are now the:
Delegation of the European Union to Nepal
Kindly update your records