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**Loosing Competitive Advantage in the Water Resources Sector**

After the Fukushima Daichi incident in Japan, the world focus on energy is shifting away from nuclear to clean energy, and hydroelectric power is at the forefront of the global agenda. Hydroelectric power as a valuable and renewable resource provides the potential for overall economic development and offers ample opportunity to harness Nepal's abundantly available water resources. It could be a means for takeoff and departure from poverty; it could transform our society into a prosperous state. However, due to lack of clear vision and commitment from among the political and bureaucratic leadership, Nepal is not only losing its highly competitive advantage in the sector but, more importantly, the time. As the popular saying goes "Time and tide wait for none."

Nepal is home to the great Himalayas with their enormous water storage, and vast elevation differences that provide very attractive potential hydropower sites. So far, however, the country has not been able to reap the benefits of its competitive advantage. Hence, it is time to formulate concrete plans and policy for sustainable renewable energy development rather than looking for short term and unsustainable measures for energy source, such as a diesel plant.

It is time to consider why, in the context of Nepal –

- we are not able to harness the huge hydro potential of the nation even though we first initiated hydropower development a century ago;
- the simple business principal cannot become operative—i.e., while there is increasing demand of energy for domestic and regional markets and the proven technology and resources in the form of free flowing water resources is abundantly available;
- the leadership of the country cannot demonstrate their commitment for developing hydropower for the benefit of the people and the nation, rather than making it a politically charged bargaining weapon;
- the Nepalese people are suffering from poverty and all forms of inequality, while Mother Nature has bestowed upon us such precious resources;
- some percentage of the remittances from foreign employment by our citizens cannot be channeled to a productive sector like hydropower development; and
- why there cannot be a coordinated approach among the competent authorities in the government of Nepal for hydropower development.

The severe load shedding that the Nepalese suffer cannot be justified in the face of the country's huge hydropower potential. It clearly demonstrates that there are petty vested interests and a lack of concerted effort among key stakeholders involved in the process.

Recent global trends, from initiation of uprising in Tunisia and the beginning of the 'Arab Spring' to the 'Occupy Wall Street' movement in USA, reveal the kind of forces that drive people to demand better economic well-being and the equitable distribution of national resources.

Finally, HYDRO Nepal joined hands with JVS, devoted to overall development of Water Resources of Nepal, for support to its sustainable publication and strengthen network with international sphere. We look forward for a fruitful cooperation.

Jeewan P. Thanju
Editor-in-Chief