Inauguration Ceremony

Chief Guest Rt. Hon’ble Nanda Bahadur Pun, President of FDR Nepal formally inaugurated the CityNet conference by lighting a traditional lamp at Bhandarkhal Garden, Patan Durbar Square on November 6, 2019.

Mr. Chiri Babu Maharjan, Mayor of LMC welcomed the Chief Guest Rt. Hon’ble Nanda Bahadur Pun, President of Nepal, Vijaya Jagannathan, Secretary General of CityNet, distinguished guests, delegates and pthers present in the inaugural ceremony. He said he was delighted to host the 38th Executive Committee Meeting and International Seminar of CityNet in Lalitpur, being one of the newest executive members, in coordination with CityNet secretariat based in Seoul, Korea. He urges the Nepali members of CityNet (14 municipalities plus 4 others) for developing a common understanding to make best use of CityNet services.

Welcome dance of Bhairav+Kali was presented representing Tangible reality and Immense power.

The message of Park Won-soon, president of CityNet and Mayor of Seoul was presented as he could not attend the event. He hoped that this year’s Executive Committee Meeting will build meaningful momentum for the mutual development of CityNet members.

CityNet is striving to bolster the capacities of its members and create more opportunities for cooperation in various areas, such as technological development, training, education and CityNet services, he said. “Nepal is a symbol of the strength of humanity. I would like to express my sincere respect for the citizens of Nepal and Lalitpur who overcome that hardship (of the 2015 devastating earthquake) and are now planting the seeds of hope in the ruins”, he opined.
Vijaya Jagannathan, General Secretary of CityNet congratulated Lalitpur Metropolitan City for hosting the event and hoped that all CityNet members will benefit from the deliberations and experience sharing. After the heritage walk of Patan city, he saw the infrastructure development keeping in mind the income generation for the local people. He feels Lalitpur can become a truly global destination for tourism and world heritage. He felt it a matter of pride that Nepal was never under foreign colonial rule.

In his message, he expressed immense pleasure about Lalitpur Metropolitan City hosting the 38th CityNet Executive Committee meeting in the “City of Fine Arts”: Lalitpur, Nepal. He believed CityNet could play a pivotal role in developing professional human resources, governance and technology integration which is essential for us to reach global targets.

The gathering of more than 150 delegates from more than 10 countries of Asia Pacific region including mayors, administrators, civil leaders and international experts in this event in Lalitpur overwhelmed the Vice President.

He congratulated Lalitpur Metropolitan City for being elected to the executive committee of CityNet, which is a common platform to effectively solve common problems of local government. He wished more municipalities of Nepal could benefit from CityNet membership. Vice President Pun said the country was witnessing a stable political environment and was heading towards economic prosperity, the event would be instrumental to identify problems in urban areas and explore ways to solve them.

About CityNet

CityNet is the largest association of urban stakeholders committed to sustainable development in Asia Pacific region. Established in 1987 with the support of UNESCAP, UNDP and UN-Habitat, the Network of cities has grown to include more than 135 municipalities, NGOs, private companies and research centers. CityNet connects actors, exchange knowledge and build commitment to establish more sustainable and resilient cities.

CityNet helps build leadership capacity to develop and prosper the cities through exchange of good practices and experiences between cities and affiliated organizations. It promotes cooperative links and partnerships throughout the Asia Pacific in order to improve the sustainability of our cities.

Lalitpur Metropolitan City is a member of CityNet for the past two decades and it was elected to Executive Committee Member last year. There are 18 members of CityNet in Nepal, including 14 municipalities. Lalitpur Metropolitan City has hosted 38th Executive Committee meeting of CityNet together with an international seminar on ‘Heritage and Sustainable Tourism’.

The three- day program is believed to help promote Nepal’s tourism worldwide through the 88 foreign delegates, including 14 Mayors and heads of various international organizations participating, together with 43 local delegates. It is a great opportunity for Nepal and Lalitpur Metropolitan City to introduce itself to the entire world, especially in the context of Visit Nepal Year 2020, announced by the government of Nepal. The CityNet’s program will greatly help to promote Visit Nepal Year 2020 and will also pave the way for cooperation in the field of tourism development and heritage conservation in Nepal.

This program will be important for exchanging experiences between municipalities in Asia and the Pacific region. Nepali municipalities that are members of CityNet include Bharatpur, Biratnagar, Pokhara, Kathmandu, Godavari, Mahalaxmi and Tansen. Similarly, Birgunj, Dharan, Hetaunda sub-metropolitan cities are also the members of CityNet.
Mayor of Lalitpur Metropolitan City Mr. Chiri Babu Maharjan welcoming the guests

General Secretary of CityNet Mr. Vijaya Jagannathan addressing Inaugural Session

Address by the Chief Guest Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Nanda Bahadur Pun, Vice President of Nepal
38th CityNet Executive Committee Meeting

Item 1: Election of the Vice Chairperson
Item 2: Adoption of the Agendas
Item 3: Report of the 37th session of Executive Committee held on November 21, 2018 in Da Nang
Item 4: Annual Report for the year 2018
Item 5: Audit Report for the year 2018
Item 6: Ratification of Appointments of Secretariat staff
Item 7: Report of the institutional & program activities for the year 2019
Item 8: Report on Admission of new members
Item 9: Report on Suspension, Termination, Withdrawal of Membership & reduction of Membership Fees
Item 10: Reports and Plans on National Chapters (Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Philippines)
Item 11: Report of the Clusters: Climate Change, Disaster, Infrastructure and SDG
Item 12: Report and Plan of CityNet Yokohama Project Office
Item 13: Report on Biennial Program Activities for the year 2020
Item 14: Report on Budget, Institutional and Program Activities for the year 2020
Item 15: Other Matters
Item 16: Date and Venue of 39th Session of the Executive Committee of CityNet in 2020.
Item 17: CityNet Think City MoU Signing

CityNet was established in 1987 under UNESCAP and UNDP to address growing urban issues in the Asia Pacific Region. The members consist of full members (city governments) as well as associate members (organisations, academic sector, NGOs and private sector companies). As of January 2019, CityNet has 154 members out of which 99 are city governments and 55 are organisations and institutions.

The 38th CityNet Executive Committee meeting approved an additional 11 full members and 5 associate members. Among the new members Bheemdatta Municipality and Dhangadhi Municipality are the full members from members. Two associate members of NAST and Lumanti’s membership has also been approved.

The key issues raised during the CityNet Executive Committee meeting are the need to improve financial status and to increase more urban stakeholders who may play a key role in providing the solutions that the cities may need to address the growing urban issues.

As the host of CityNet National Chapter Nepal, NSET presented the common issues of the cities in Nepal which includes disaster risk reduction, solid waste management, pollution, governance, income generation, etc. The Executive Committee will examine the concerns of the members in Nepal through further engagements and dialogues to find viable solutions.

In order to access CityNet services, the members were also encouraged to sign up in 2 clusters that may address their priority issues and communicate with CityNet Secretariat so that coordination and follow-up of activities could be initiated.

Meeting Deliberations:

The 38th Executive Committee Meeting discussed all the agenda items and adopted reports presented there. A MOU was signed to have the 39th Executive Meeting of CityNet in Jeju island, Republic of Korea during 23-25 April 2020.

The meeting also adopted 16 new members (11 full members and 5 Associate members):

Full Members:
1. Jambi City, Indonesia
2. City Government of Sorsogon, Philippines
3. Taoyuan City Government, Chinese Taipei
4. Gwangjin-gu, Republic of Korea
5. Jungnang-gu, Republic of Korea
6. City of Masbate, Philippines
7. Bheemadatta Municipality, Nepal
8. Guro-gu, Republic of Korea
9. Dhangadi Sub-Metropolitan City, Nepal
10. Jeju Special Self-Governing Provincial Council, Republic of Korea
11. Local Government Unit-Cauayan City, Philippines

Associate Members:
1. Think City Sdn Bhd, Malaysia
2. Nepal Academy of Science & Technology, Nepal
3. InnoCSR Co; Ltd, Republic of Korea
4. Lumanti (Memory) Support Group for Shelter, Nepal
5. RMS Consulting Co. Ltd, Republic of Korea
Heritage Walk of Lalitpur
Nakabahil - Nyakha Chuka - Nag Bahal - Golden Temple - Newa Chhen - Swatha Square – Patan Durbar Square & Bungamati

Before the inaugural session, the foreign delegates participated in ‘heritage walk’ from Patan Dhoka to Patan Durbar Square, where a troupe of artists performed cultural procession and dances.

The inaugural session was followed by cultural dances of different tribal groups of Nepal continuously through out the dinner.
Local Press Clippings

After the informal meet with the leading editors of local media on November 5 and a Press Meet on November 6 to brief about the CityNet meeting and its significance for Nepal, several press and online medias and national TV gave a good coverage of the CityNet event in Lalitpur. Some clippings of the local press covering the event are reproduced below:

**CityNet hosts seminar to discuss heritage and tourism**

More than 150 delegates from Asia-Pacific region are in Lalitpur for the event.

**Himalayan News Service**

**Executive committee meeting of CityNet begins in Lalitpur**

The 38th executive committee meeting of CityNet, an organisation of 135 municipalities and urban stakeholders of 25 countries in Asia-Pacific region, working in the field of sustainable urban development, kicked off in Lalitpur today.

Around 80 foreign delegates representing various municipalities and urban stakeholders participated in ‘heritage walk’ from Patan Dhoaka to Patan Thathaur Sqaure today.

The participants of the walk then gathered at Bhandarkhal garden where Vice-president Nanda Bahadur Pun formally inaugurated the three-day event.

The event will help share knowledge about development of Lalitpur Metropolitan City and other member cities of CityNet. The event will also provide a platform’s for discussions about Visit Nepal-2020.

CityNet was founded in 1987 with the support of UNESCAP UNDP and UN-Habitat, where 135 members, including municipalities and urban organisations, work together to build sustainable cities.

LMMC became member of CityNet 29 years ago, and till date there are 14 local governments and four urban organisations as members of CityNet in Nepal. Hetauda Sub-metropolitan City is the chair municipality of Nepal chapter of CityNet.

Welcoming the foreign delegates in Patan, Vice President Pun said since the country was witnessing a stable political environment and was heading towards economic prosperity, the event would be instrumental in identifying problems in urban areas and explore ways to solve them. He also requested the participants to increase the number of metropolitan cities under CityNet.

Mayor of LMC Chiti Babu Maharjan, during the press meet said the organisation would be a good platform for sharing ideas on how to conserve sites of cultural value, natural resources and carry out development works.

General Secretary of CityNet Vijay Jaganathan stressed the importance of taking timely measures to address burning issues such as global warming.

‘Cities should be built for people not for cars,’ Jaganathan said at the press meet. He further said although it might sound like science fiction, negative impacts of global warming will be seen after 45 to 50 years. He said the problem could be solved if use of fossil fuel was minimised.

**Asia-Pacific mayors vow to work for sustainable, resilient cities**

Mayor of over a dozen metropolitan cities of the Asia-Pacific region have stressed on working together in the field of sustainable urban development. They made a pledge to work together to establish more sustainable and resilient cities during the International Seminar on Heritage and Sustainable Tourism that kicked off in Lalitpur on Wednesday.

The seminar organized along the 38th executive committee meeting of CityNet is being attended by 88 foreign delegates including 14 mayors.

Vice President Nanda Bahadur Pun inaugurated the seminar amid a special function held at Patan Durbar Square. He said that CityNet—an organisation of municipalities in Asia Pacific region together with other stakeholders working in the field of sustainable urban development—can play a major role in making the cities of Nepal more standard and smart.

With the collaboration of 135 municipalities, NGOs, private companies and research centers and working with the support of international bodies the UNESCAP UNDP and UN-Habitat, CityNet is recognised as the largest network of cities that collaboratively work hard to hand in the sector of sustainable and resilient development of cities.

Since the last three decades, the organisation has successfully worked for promotion of exchange in knowledge and practices, combating global climate change and disaster resilience, advancing urban issues on the global sustainability agenda and has been shaping the largest network of urban stakeholders across the Asia Pacific region.

Lalitpur Metropolitan City was elected as CityNet executive committee member last year in a competition held in Sri Lanka.

Our membership as executive committee member of this organisation has been helping Nepalese cities to connect with other cities and municipalities in order to discuss about the urban issues that are facing,” said Lalitpur’s Mayor Chiti Babu Maharjan.

**Aditi Baral, Kathmandu, November 5**
Press Meet on November 6, 2019:

In a press meet on November 6, General Secretary of CityNet Mr. Vijaya Jagannathan stressed the importance of taking timely measures to address burning issues such as global warming. “Cities should be built for people not cars. If you reduce the number of vehicles and air pollution, this will help to make a livable city” he said. Problem could be solved is use of fossil fuel is minimized. He also elaborated on how the member countries and municipalities can work together to preserve their tangible and intangible heritage which are under risk. CityNet educates and give an orientation to members so that they take leadership and work for change in different sectors in the region.

Mr. Chiri Babu Maharjan, the Mayor of Lalitpur Metropolitan City (LMC) said the CityNet would be a good platform for sharing ideas on how to conserve the sites of cultural value, natural resources and carry out development works. Post 2015 earthquake LMC has trained many engineers and started teaching online course in community schools in all 29 wards besides forming disaster risk reduction centers in all wards to reduce socio-economic vulnerabilities to disaster. He also indicated Lalitpur city is all set to prevent two and four wheeled vehicles from entering the Patan area which is a open museum and a heritage site.
and lakes as water is the integral part of city culture. We provide benefit out of it. Our suggestions is to have the lot of ponds in certain areas like cultural heritage sites. We carry a zone in certain areas like cultural heritage sites. We carry a to involve young people, let them start saying no traffic

My suggestion to the Mayor was why not use social media to sell for money and does not want to stay in a very old building, while visiting foreign tourists would love to see them. That is the kind of problem we saw here also. The second thing is the increasing vehicular traffic creating congestion and pollution. It is bad for people specially the children. This definitely hearts tourism, because they spend lot less time if the area is too much congested. So, it helps to improve because the value of private property goes up. They can make more money on selling their services. We see that happening. Of course there are issues that some of the very old buildings which are part of the heritage, families after 2-3 generations don’t want to keep it like they want to sell it. That is the problem in all cultural heritage sites. How to balance between something very beautiful and cultural heritage which the owner wants to sell for money and does not want to stay in a very old building, while visiting foreign tourists would love to see them. That is the kind of problem we saw here also. The second thing is the increasing vehicular traffic creating congestion and pollution. It is bad for people specially the children. This definitely hearts tourism, because they spend lot less time if the area is too much congested. So, it hearts the income source.

My suggestion to the Mayor was why not use social media to involve young people, let them start saying no traffic

The impression I got out of all this is that a lot has been done. We also took a tour of cultural heritage, we were shown what is happening in the city and the money received from the government and the World Bank were well spent. What we saw was quite impressive with huge amount of efforts and most of the works have benefitted the public. We found many of the buildings have been upgraded and converting then into small boutique hotels and restaurants and so on.

We organize such meetings every year to share with executive members and also to plan ahead of next year’s program. Each time one city is a host city and we focus a lot on issues of that city. In the case of Lalitpur, the Mayor’s interest was that Nepal’s 2020 Tourism year is coming, how can Lalitpur help in achieving the 2 million tourists coming in, to have a good experience, what is the kind of advise which CityNet can give and also to get feedback.

The membership has helped to minimize disaster relief measures. Technical capability of many schools in the district has been upgraded with computer based education. The most important benefit is the common platform in Asia Pacific region where common problems can be shared and problems solved.

Two more municipalities of Nepal have gained CityNet membership this year, thus increasing the number to 14 municipalities of Nepal affiliated to CityNet. I believe the CityNet meeting and international seminar on Heritage & Sustainable Tourism will greatly help Nepal’s Visit Nepal Year 2020. This event will help expose Nepal as a birthplace of Lord Buddha, a country of Sagarmatha the Mount Everest and the heritages of Lalitpur: a city of Fine Arts.

Mayor of Lalitpur Metropolitan City (LMC) Mr. Chiri Babu Maharjan feels glorious and happy to host the CityNet Executive Committee meeting and International Seminar in Lalitpur. LMC was elected as executive committee member of CityNet last year.

The membership has helped to minimize disaster relief measures. Technical capability of many schools in the district has been upgraded with computer based education. The most important benefit is the common platform in Asia Pacific region where common problems can be shared and problems solved.

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