

FOREX			
CURRENCY	UNIT	BUYING (in Rs)	SELLING (in Rs)
Indian Rupee	100	160.90	160.15
U.S. Dollar	1	97.80	98.20
Euro	1	187.08	181.88
Pound Sterling	1	164.18	165.17
Japanese Yen	10	9.51	9.57
Chinese Yuan	1	15.79	15.89

The foreign exchange rates are fixed by Nepal Rastra Bank

Kathmanau, August 3

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi today said New Delhi was ready to accommodate Nepal's concerns about the Treaty of Peace and Friendship and resolve boundary issues, including in Susta and Kalapahi.

During one-on-one meeting with Prime Minister Sushil Koirala and delegation-level talks led by the two premiers, Modi promised to take effective measures to reduce Nepal's alarming trade-gap of some 400 bil-

lion US dollars to be used in infrastructure development and energy projects as identified by the Nepali government.

According to PM's Foreign Affairs Adviser Dinesh Bhattarai, who attended bilateral talks, the Indian PM urged Nepali side to capitalise on huge Indian market to sell Nepali products.

"The prime minister of India stated that India was ready to resolve boundary issues, take measures to

on the Treaty of Peace of 1950," read a foreign minister issued after the talks.

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SINDHUPALCHOWK LANDSLIDE

155 still missing

Raj Kumar Parajuli
Sindhupalchowk, August 3

At least 155 people are missing after a landslide struck Sindhupalchowk yesterday and rescuers have lost any hope of finding them alive though rescue operations continued today as well in Sindhupalchowk.

Sindhupalchowk CDO Gopal Prasad Parajuli said 155 missing people have been identified and the

number of the missing could go up as the district administration was collecting data on loss and damage to life and property. He ruled out the possibility of finding any missing person alive.

The landslide that blocked the Sunkoshi River had buried more than 20 houses in Jure bazaar and 50 in Mankha VDC. More than 5,000 residents from over a dozen VDCs have been displaced.

Police said one more unidentified body was recovered from the incident site today, raising the death toll to 10. Local administration reported that 27 people stuck under the debris were rescued today.

The landslide swept away five more houses this morning. It has also damaged two iron gates of Lam-osanghu-Sunkoshi hydro electricity dam.

DPM and Home Minister Bamdev Gautam and Irrigation Minister NP Saud inspected the incident site this morning. Gautam's inspection was followed by announcement of immediate relief of Rs 5,000 to each victim. The locals were not satisfied with the government's response and clashed with the police.

Kin lose hope

SINDHUPALCHOWK: Tek Bahadur Timilsina, 63, of Jure has been searching for his 30-year-old daughter-in-law Mithu, who ran a grocery store in Jure Bazaar, and his two grandsons Rajiv and Ramit, aged 10 and 8, respectively, after they went missing in the landslide on Sunday morning. "I have been looking for them since morning and I'm losing hope to find them alive," said Tek Bahadur, whose son has gone to UN peace-mission.

Another local, Ram Bahadur Lama, said five members each from his and his brother's family had gone missing. "Where shall I search for them? I don't hope to even find their bodies," said Lama. He said he and his son were the only ones from his family to have survived the tragedy.

Ganesh Kumari Paudel, a peon at local Bansanghu Secondary School, can't find her daughter-in-law and grandchildren after the landslide struck. — HNS

**Long Live
Nepal-India Friendship**

Shri Narendra Damodardas Modi
Prime Minister of Republic of India

Shanker Group extends Heartfelt Wishes for the success of the visit. May Nepal-India Friendship grow stronger and live long.

SHANKER GROUP
Commission Agent of IOCL for Nepal

IndianOil

Landslide hits five hydropower projects

Creates a shortfall of 66.5MW electricity in national grid

SANJEEV GIRI
KATHMANDU, AUG 2

The massive landslide in Sindhupalchowk district on Saturday that caused an abrupt interruption in the flow of the Sunkoshi River has hit five hydropower projects downstream.

According to Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), there will be shortfall of 66.5MW electricity in the national grid due to the landslide.

Power transmission from five hydropower projects—Bhotekoshi (45MW), Sunkoshi (10MW), Sanima Sunkoshi (2.5MW), Chaku (6MW) and Bhairabkunda (3MW) has been halted temporarily. In the current situation, the shortfall of 66.5MW electricity means an increment in load-shedding by one and half hours a day.

NEA said the landslide at Jure has swept away two gates of the Sunkoshi Power House headworks, according to NEA.

While the power house of Bhotekoshi is safe, electricity supply has been interrupted due to the damage caused in three of its transmission line towers. One of the towers was completely swept away in the landslide, while the remaining two have been partially damaged.

"The power house of Sanima Sunkoshi Project has been submerged. The power house and all equipment are under the water," said Tuk Prasad Paudel, director of Sanima Hydropower Company.

Two other projects—Chaku and Bhairabkunda—too are out of



• A powerhouse of Sanima Sunkoshi project is submerged in the Sunkoshi River, on Saturday.

POST PHOTO: KIRAN PANDEY

order following problems in transmission line towers.

"The situation might turn worse if the river blocked by the landslide debris starts flowing with force. A possible flood might sweep away headworks of other power houses causing more losses," said NEA officiating Managing Director Ram Chandra Pandey.

NEA is considering increasing electricity imports from India to

neutralise the loss. "We are trying to increase imports from places like Raxaul and Kataiya of India to meet the demand," said Pandey, adding how much energy will be imported from India will be finalised on Sunday.

Since the country has only one storage-type project, NEA has no other option, but to increase power imports.

"The water level in Kulekhani

AFFECTED PROJECTS

Name	Capacity
Bhotekoshi	45 MW
Sunkoshi	10 MW
Chaku	6 MW
Bhairabkunda	3MW
Sanima Sunkoshi	2.5 MW
Total	66.5 MW

project is already low and operating it now might cause a big problem during the winter. Therefore, we have to rely on imports."

Aviation regulator to invite ICAO experts

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Landslide blocks Sunkoshi, thousands live 8 dead, dozens injured, over 100 missing

DHRUBA DANGAL
SINDHUPALCHOWK, Aug 2

A massive landslide on Saturday has left at least eight people dead and injured many more, and also blocked the flow of the Sunkoshi River in Mankha village, Sindhupalchowk district.

The death toll from the landslide is expected to rise further as at least 100 people are reported to be still missing, according to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA). The landslide caused the formation of a huge dam across the river, triggering fears in downstream villages of a Landslide Dam Outburst Flood (LDOF). The

Nepal Army (NA) has tried to ease pressure on the dam by using explosives to cut channels through it, but the river was still mostly blocked as of Saturday night.

Authorities said that the landslide buried 52 houses. However, the local people claimed that the number of houses buried could be much higher.

The place where the landslide occurred is about 120 kilometers east of Kathmandu, and there are three hydropower plants nearby. The landslide also damaged parts of the Araniko highway, cutting off the land route between Kathmandu and Tibet.

The landslide occurred on the boundary line between Mankha and Ramche VDCs. In the past also, several smaller landslides had occurred at the same locality. But this is the first such massive landslide here.

As the dam resulting from the landslide grew larger by the hour, at least three human settlements became submerged. Dam-site bazaar in Mankha-1, Kagune village in Mankha-5 and another settlement in Tekanpur-5 vanished into the water. Security personnel rescued 16 people from Damsite and seven from Tekanpur villages before these became submerged; no one was rescued from Kagune village.

According to Sindhupalchowk District Police Office, 26 houses at Damsite, 16 at Kagune and seven houses at Tekanpur disappeared. At Damsite, a school was also buried under the landslide-induced dam.

The landslide started in the wee hours of Saturday. Locals said it sounded like an earthquake at first. "I heard a series of deafening sounds," said Sitaram Shrestha, a local of Dam-

site. "Only later did I find out that it was a landslide." He quickly rushed to higher ground with his family and they all survived. "Had I not woken up quickly, I would have died along with my family," he said.

At dawn, police alerted everyone to flee to safer locations. But, till late Saturday morning, people were still running here and there in search of safety. By evening, police were able to identify only six of the dead. They have been identified as Abhishek Shrestha, 40, of Batasay VDC-1, Asmadevi Shrestha, 18, Ramdevi Shrestha, 17, Ganeshmaya Shrestha, 40, Birma Shrestha, 30, and Shyam Shrestha, 35, of Mankha VDC-1.

Local authorities say explosions set off by the NA have slightly reduced the risk of flood outburst. "The risk has been reduced," said Chief District Officer Gopal Prasad Parajuli. "The water volume in the landslide-induced dam is declining. The blocked water is now flowing through the small channels created by the explosions, albeit only partially."



(Top) A view of the Saturday's landslide that blocked the Sunkoshi River in Mankha VDC, Sindhupalchowk has formed a 4 km long lake. Nepal Army has blasted small outlets for the water to prevent flooding. (Above right) Security personnel bring bodies of landslide victims at Jhure Bazaar, vacating their homes.

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- Seven districts of east Nepal at risk of flooding **page 4**



The blocks Sunkoshi, thousands live in fear s injured, over 100 missing

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(Top) A view of the Saturday's landslide that blocked the Sunkoshi River in Mankha VDC, Sindhupalchowk, seen from Saat Kilo, Dolakha. The blockage has formed a 4 km long lake. Nepal Army has blasted small outlets for the water to prevent flood outburst. (Above left) Locals in the area vacating their homes. (Above right) Security personnel bring bodies of landslide victims at Jhure Bazaar, Sindhupalchowk. (More photos on page 4)

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Nembang.

Foreign Affairs Minister Mahendra Bahadur Pandey and top leaders of the major political parties and the Madhes-based parties, the industrialists and businessmen will call on Prime Minister Modi.

Indian PM Modi is also scheduled to attend the bilateral talks as well as deliver a special speech in the Legislature Parliament on Sunday afternoon, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

relationships with Nepal

RSS

Kathmandu, Aug. 2

Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi says he is looking forward to working with the leadership of Nepal to forge a new relationship for the new century between Nepal and India which he described as two rapidly transforming countries.

The Indian Prime Minister said this in a statement he issued in New Delhi today on the eve of his visit to Nepal. He is arriving here on an official visit Sunday at the invitation of Prime Minister Sushil Koirala.

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Modi will pay homage to the Pashupatinath Sunday morning and return home in the evening wrapping up his two day visit.

Modi, the fifteenth Prime Minister of India, is the senior leader of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party.

Modi, whose full name is Narendra Damodar Das Modi, was born on 17th September in 1950 in Gujarat state of India.

His successful leadership as the Chief Minister of the

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13 KILLED, OVER 200 MISSING IN MUDSLIDE

Blocked Sunkoshi River begins to flow smoothly

By Our Correspondent Sindhupalchowk, Aug 2

The water clogged by a massive landslide at Jure of Ramche VDC early Saturday morning up the Sunkoshi River began to flow after the Nepal Army personnel caused two blasts at the debris.

"The blocked water drained out from the northern side of the River," said Kamal Dwibedi, a member of the NA rescue team.

He said that further dangers

of flash floods had receded. The debris created a four kilometer long lake with 40-metre high dams, almost the size of Fewa Lake.

In order to minimize the impending dangers, the two helicopters and a group of 40 security personnel are on a standby near the disaster-hit area.

Following the blasts at 2:40 pm and 2:50 pm today, the water level went down by two metres. The debris filled up the

river at Jure, sending the water level 130 metres above the river bed.

At least nine people were killed and about 200 others went missing in the landslip.

Around 40 people are wounded and 80 houses were swept away. Thousands of people have been displaced and they are likely to be stranded on the hills of Sindhuplachok and Sindhuli at night as their rehabilitation task became difficult with the falling of

dark.

The people from Lamosanghu to Khurkot had fled toward safer places after the creation of the big lake by the landslide debris. The frightened locals were seen running helter-skelter with their kids on the back.

The death toll is likely to rise as the landslip buried several settlements of four VDCs – Dhuskun, Makha, Tekanpur and Ramche.

The identity of six persons

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Heavy mudslide in Jure, Mankha VDC blocked the Sunkoshi river. But water level gradually receded in the late afternoon. Dozens of houses were buried in mudslide. (Photo Courtesy: Nepal Army)

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INSIDE BUSINESS

Breastfeeding can save new b

Investment in youth will help reap demographic

By A Staff Reporter Kathmandu, Aug 2

babies up to 28 days is still a big challenge for Nepal, Dr.

for newborns and infants, providing all the nutrients

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Modi says

"I hope my visit will open a new chapter in India-Nepal relations, characterised by more frequent political engagement and closer cooperation across the full spectrum of our extraordinarily broad-based relations, which will serve as a model and catalyst for South Asian partnership for prosperity."

Himalayan News Service

Kathmandu, August 2

Breaking a hiatus of 17 long years, an Indian prime minister is arriving in Nepal tomorrow for a two-day official visit, which is set to resume top-level political contacts between Kathmandu and New Delhi.

Leading a delegation of 75 officials, Narendra Modi is set to land in TIA at 11:50am. He will be the first Indian prime minister to visit Nepal for a bilateral visit since JK Gujral's visit in June 1997.

Both Nepali and Indian sides have stated that Modi's visit would resume contacts between the two neighbours at the highest-political level, as New Delhi had largely been dealing with Nepal through bureaucracy and security agencies for the last 10 years of Congress rule.

Foreign Minister Mahendra Bahadur Pandey said



Locals at the site of a massive landslide in Jure of Ramche VDC, Sindhupalchowk, that blocked the Sunkoshi River on Saturday morning.

Landslide blocks river, kills 8

• Scores missing in Sindhupalchowk • 70 houses buried

Raj Kumar Parajuli

Sindhupalchowk, August 2

A massive landslide in Sindhupalchowk's Ramche VDC swept away the entire Jure bazaar this morning, leaving at least eight persons dead and more than 40 injured. Many persons are said to have gone missing.

The landslide that occurred around 2:00am buried over 70 houses of Jure, leaving scores of people missing, while the huge debris of the landslip has blocked the Sunkoshi River, turning the river upstream into a lake.

The swollen river poses a threat to villages downstream in case the accumulated water bursts through the blockade. The almost four-km long swollen river stretch from the blocked site has submerged as many as 150 houses and the power house of Sanima hydropower project on the river front.

The deceased include a child, three women and four men. According to Inspector Jeyashwor Rimal of the Barhabise Police Post, 40 persons, including a Belgian national, have been rescued, while a severed

human arm was found from the landslide debris. "Though 18 persons are said to be missing, the number is yet to be confirmed as a number of houses were swept away in the disaster," said Rimal.

Of the injured, 13 have been airlifted to the Capital while the rest are undergoing treatment in Sindhupalchowk. "I was asleep when the shaking of the ground woke me up. When I learnt about the blocked river I fled to a higher place with my family," recounted Rajendra Timalsina of Jholunge, Lamosanghu, adding, "We came to our houses at the break of

dawn only to return with our belongings." Security personnel have shifted people living near the swollen part of the river to safer places. "Death toll will be known only after studying the VDC data," said CA member from Sindhupalchowk Mohan Bahadur Basnet.

Meanwhile, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi today expressed concern about the blockage on the Sunkoshi River in Nepal. According to India's Press Information Bureau, he has directed that all possible help should be provided to Nepal and the Bihar government.

More villages under threat

SINDHUPALCHOWK: Keeping in view the threat from the blocked water, teams of local administration, Nepali Army and road division reached the site to discuss ways to open the blocked river. Nepali Army got triggered explosives on the heap of the landslip debris at 10:00 am and later at 2:00pm. The government has urged the Indian government to open all the sluice gates of the Koshi Barrage. The government has declared the area within 200 metres on the riverfront from Jure to Koshi Barrage crisis-prone zone. In Sindhupalchowk itself, villages near the river like Lamosanghu, Barhabise, Khadichaur, Balefi and Sukute bazaar face high risk of flooding. —HNS



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